

Movies

Since my blogging friends are big movie buffs, I thought I would mention a couple of movies that I have watched recently. While they likely saw them in the theater when released, I of course watched them on DVD which provide nice extras in the form of deleted scenes and such. Recently I checked out from the library called [The Transporter](#). This movie was about a professional driver named Frank Martin (played by Jason Statham, someone I had never heard about before this movie), and I don't mean racing. This driver works for whoever needs him, no questions asked. He is organized to a fault and has a strict code, or set of rules he follows. When I say organized to a fault I mean he has spare suits neatly folded and wrapped in the trunk of his car for those occasions where someone tries to off him and messes up his clothes. Of course, he is well versed in the martial arts and can hold his own against over half a dozen opponents at once though with his normal GQ demeanor you would never guess until the first roundhouse.

At the start of this movie you find him making a transaction on the phone and then he is off on business, precisely on time. He stops in front of a bank, the alarms go off, and the clients run out the bank to his car. Only there's a slight problem- the clients have suddenly changed the negotiated terms and that just won't do. No leaving until things are settled, Frank's way of course. Never mind the sirens getting closer and closer as he refuses to leave until the terms are met. Once they are about to be busted, they settle things, Frank starts his car, and they are off on a chase that involves a lot of destruction and closeups of him changing gears. When the dust finally settles, the pursuit has been shaken and his obligation met and paid for (the precise amount- see the movie for what I mean) he heads home, calmly changes the license plates on his car with one of several

backups and walks in, eventually joined by an inspector who noticed Frank's car happened to match the description of the getaway vehicle. If only the plates matched..

Anyway, soon he is off on his next assignment. On it, he happens to break one of his own rules and the movie takes off from there. Lots of action in this movie as you can imagine. I recommend it to action buffs.

I didn't realize there was a sequel to this movie until just last week when I saw [Transporter 2](#) at the library (can you tell where I get the majority of movies I watch? ☐) just waiting for me to snatch it up. I just watched it the other day and it was every bit as action-packed and entertaining as the first. This time, however, the transportation job he has is a bit more legit. Once he takes care of some would-be car-jackers at the beginning, he straightens up his clothing, complains about being off schedule, and heads off. Of course he is precisely on time when he arrives, meaning he must have made up for the time on his way. Eventually, he learns the hard way eventually that his clients are the target of someone who is not too happy with the work one of them is doing in cleaning up crime. Long story short, Frank becomes the victim of something more than his own misdeeds and is falsely accused of being involved, a big chase scene occurs, and Frank is left to his own to take care of the real criminals and clear his name. The inspector (played by [François Berléand](#) who has a very long resumé at IMDB) is back, this time on vacation at Frank's place, getting caught up in the middle. In both movies he is an invaluable resource for Frank helping him get things taken care of.

In any event, again I highly recommend these movies for those interested in action flicks. Transporter 3 is due out in November of this year and I will probably be seeing it in the theater instead of waiting for the DVD. For those who know me, that's a recommendation in itself. ☐

Flashback!

In the last few days, my recovery from the emergency c-section has not been going well. I awoke from a nap Thursday night feeling awful, but luckily my medication kicked in, and I was able to enjoy the midnight showing of The Dark Knight – more on that later. Friday we met Grandma in South Bend Indiana which is halfway between Chicago where she lives and Ohio where we live to transfer my kids for a week's vacation with Grandma. I felt awful all day, and I started shivering in the restaurant. I knew there was something really wrong when I went outside into the 90° oven and actually *enjoyed* it – uh oh.

When I got back to Ohio, I had an appointment with my doctor for her to take out my staples (yes, they had to actually use *staples* to put me back together, yuck) and that actually went well. Hardly hurt at all, just a little pinch, and it didn't take long. I brought up my symptoms to my doctor and she said everything was normal, and I believed her because when I had my other babies, I would heal up right away, so I figured these were all just side effects from the cesarean. But I took another nap when I got home and when I woke up, I felt like I was dying – that's really the only way to describe it. We took my temperature and it was 102.7°, so of course I had chills, the sweats, headache, and pain. A quick look on the internet gave us the diagnosis: mastitis – a common infection often suffered by breast-feeding mothers. We called the doctor and they wouldn't prescribe any antibiotics over the phone, so we headed to the hospital for the 2nd time in a week...

The admissions people panicked when they saw us coming in with the baby, but we quickly explained it wasn't him, thank

goodness. Anyway, after a quick look, the ER doctor confirmed our internet diagnosis and sent us home with a prescription. But since all the pharmacies were closed in our town, they gave me some medicine right then and there. "Name and birthdate", they always ask at the hospital before they give you your meds, and I was like, FLASHBACK! I thought I was done with this for awhile! But for spending a Friday night in the ER, it wasn't so bad; we were actually in and out in an hour. If this had happened in suburban Chicago where I used to live, it would have taken 3-4 hours to wait our turn in the ER, and they would have wheeled a few body bags past us while we were waiting. So today, I feel much better comparatively, and since the girls are with grandma, I slept until 11:30, so I'm sure that also helped. The antibiotics seem to be working already, and it was nice to wake up and not feel like I was dying, something that hasn't happened for a few days. I also feel better that now I think my recovery from everything is headed in the right direction, whereas when I felt crappy and didn't know why, it was discouraging because I was thinking, will I ever feel better?

My husband is peeved at my OB-GYN for not checking me more thoroughly during my visit with her yesterday. I agree; I did mention my symptoms and she was too dismissive, but being a man (especially one who won't listen to doctor's orders – if the doctor tells him to do something or recommends some sort of exam or test and he doesn't want to do it, he just won't) I don't think he understands how important to me it is to have a woman OB-GYN, and she is the only one in town. Besides, I do like her, she is gentle and she has been through 3 c-sections herself, so she knew exactly what to tell me about what to expect. If we do have any more children, there will be some debate about which doctor we will use. Well, anyway... off to Walmart to get my *third* prescription this week!

Not the movie review...

I was going to make a quick post on the new Batman movie, but that can wait. Watching the movie made me think of other things.

Earlier post is in Bold print, newer thoughts are in the regular type.

Things like if doing good makes things go bad, are you still doing good, are you in the right?

Heroes in movies are always trying to do good and the right thing. It doesn't always work out for them. We see that in everyday life too. We try to do what is right, or good, and sometimes the way things work out, a different path should have been chosen. We can tend to dwell on this, constantly asking "What if?". Dwelling the "should ofs" and "could ofs" will inhibit our chances of make the correct choices on later issues. We can't always be assured that doing the right thing, means things will turn out good for us. Sometimes being right is worth the effort, no matter what the outcome.

What would it take to go from good to bad, or bad to good? Is it that big of a difference?

This is something I have some experience with. I know exactly how far I can be pushed. It isn't so much of going from good to bad, but it is going from easy going to violent or fairly relaxed to a nervous wreck. Major events in ones life can do a number on how you behave. You think beforehand that you know how you will react, but once in the situation, you did something you never would have believed possible. For me those experiences revolve around protecting the weak and innocent, and protecting and loving my family and friends. Since I have

been in these situations more than once, I know I would put my own health/welfare on the line if anyone I care about is in trouble. This is something deeply ingrained in who I am. I also know that if pushed too far, I could fall apart. I've been close to that too.

At what point do you have too much power?

My feelings is that you can have too much power, when power is your goal. I've always found that the people who handle power the best, are the ones that really don't want it in the first place.

What sort of circumstance would break your will? What would drive you forward? What would stop you dead in your tracks?

I had a daughter in a very serious car accident. I did things I never thought I could do. At the time it was the most difficult life experience I ever had. Just the possibility of losing a child brought me to the brink of stopping my dead in my tracks, but I pushed through and drove forward. Not much more than a year after that, my wife was told she had cancer. 1 1/2 months later it would take her life. This loss was almost to great for me. Even with my children needing me, I almost fell apart. They pulled me back from the abyss. This was something that broke my will. If my girls had not been there, or I had people pushing me in a different direction, the person I am today would not be around. Frightening thought is that I don't know who or even if I would be today. There are things that happen, that will change the person you are today. Sometimes for the good, sometimes not. I never take abrupt changes in behavior for granted any more.

Early Morning BatPost

Before I get into the meat of my post, I would like to apologize to my new theatre chum whose name I could not remember until tonight. All I have to do is recall the name of a state capitol that shares its name with an omelet... hopefully, it does not come to that. I am terrible.

Anywho, *The Dark Knight* is an interesting problem. There are pros and cons to the latest caped crusader adventure. As anyone who has access to any type of media knows, this is Heath Ledger's swan song. His Joker is the highlight of the movie. Everything about him just reeks of sadistic villainy. Just looking at him is enough to send chills up and down one's spine. But more than that, his entire characterization was evil to the core. I am sure that there will be parallels drawn to the performance (there already have been) and his untimely demise; yet, he was utterly phenomenal and should be remembered for it.

I found one aspect to be both a plus and a negative. I actually liked some of the depth of the key players. However, there was a bit (or A LOT) more than we needed. It seems that we knew the life story of EVERY character who has a name and this made the movie drag at times. Anyone who is remotely familiar with Batman knows that he fights to clean up the corruption within Gotham City... However, it seemed you could only count on one officer to be totally uncorruptable. I will say that it is a case of too much of a good thing. That being said, I believe that Mr. Nolan has gotten the characters and the overall atmosphere right in this film as well as *Batman Begins* (there are no nipples in the batsuit, and Bruce Wayne IS a playboy millionaire... although it is probably billionaire by now... and who is not above falling asleep in his own board meetings after an evening of "fun").

So, while it was lengthy and had lots of down time between

action pieces I did consider it worthwhile to be among the first to see *The Dark Knight*. The major action scenes were fun to watch and as I keep commenting, Heath Ledger was phenomenal as the Clown Prince of Crime. The hype about that is totally true. Plus, it was awesome just to be among friends old and new (if I can just remember names). Also, I was the only person brave enough to bring my bucket for BYOB night at the movies. We did arrive before midnight after all ☐ .

I almost forgot to mention my favorite bit. DA Harvey Dent's line:

You either die a hero or you live long enough to see yourself become the villain.

Prophetic sentiment.

Napping? Decidedly Not

decidedly not when I have been waiting for this movie for 3 years when Lieutenant James Gordon showed Batman a new villain's calling card during the last scene of [Batman Begins](#) setting the stage for The [Dark Knight](#) that I am going to watch at 12:01AM. As I predicted, my day at work could not have gone any slower. However, there was one moment that I am sure many who work with me (and now the readers of my blog) will not let me soon forget. I was completing the transaction of a customer I have known for years. While I was doing this, she asked me a question:

"Does your wife still run the beauty shop up the street?"

I had to ask to have the question repeated, because I knew

that I must have heard incorrectly She straight-faced repeated the question. To which I replied...

“Well... my MOTHER owns a beauty salon about a block north of here.”

She apologized about five times in 30 seconds while I was trying not to die from laughing. After the customer departed, I commented to the manager that I was not sure if that was a compliment or not. She just cracked up laughing and could not stop and of course she had to tell everyone she could. I realize that I just turned 35, but please let's not add 30 years onto that. I think I got the boss to stop laughing when I told her:

“Of course if I were 30 years older, you would be the same age as I.”

For some reason, I heard very little more on the matter from her the rest of the day.Ok... now if I don't get a nap, at least I can lie in the cool confines of my Fortress of Solitude (oh... sorry... have to wait a few more years for the Man of Steel) and relax.

Rent Batman Begins and other hits at Blockbuster.com

I'm curious...

Does anyone view the videos I post? There have been no comments at all on either the Godtube one I posted two weeks ago, nor on the Archie videos. Are they just uninteresting? No time maybe? I'm thinking of posting more videos, but if no one watches them then there's probably no point.

As for this site, I suspect if I continue it will have to undergo a name change. Now that I am no longer on a track to teach, at least for now, I am not likely to go back to subbing. I usually enjoy it, but it really doesn't pay the bills. If I was capable of running an online business in addition to it I would probably continue, but I have to find a real job, doing what is still to be determined. I still believe God was trying to tell me something those years ago when I was reading an article about teachers. I can only trust that if it wasn't to be a teacher, then that something is still out there waiting for me to determine what it is.

Scooby Update

I would like to thank everyone who offered help to us when we recently had to face the unplanned decision to find another home for one of our beloved pets. Our dog Scooby, had bitten one of our kids in the face. I sent out a plea via email to everyone I knew looking for a new home for Scooby since she was not a vicious animal, just so overwhelmed by fear and tension all the time that a house with kids was not a good home for her. Lots of people wrote back to me offering support and great tips to help find her a home, and I'd like to thank everyone. I'd also like to let you know that there is now a very happy ending to the story. Scooby was adopted by a board member of the humane society where we took her. She was taken home, and the board member just fell in love with her. She has a fenced in yard and some other dogs to play with, which is just perfect because Scooby LOVES to run and she also LOVES other dogs – it was just kids that made her nervous.

My 8-year-old daughter is a little upset, only because we told

her we could go visit Scooby and we never did. We just didn't want Scooby to smell us and get excited about coming with us until she had found a happy home of her own. Now that she has, we don't know who it is that adopted her, and my daughter is sad because she really wanted to see Scooby. It's gotten better for her though, and it's tough for an 8-year-old to understand, but we've explained how Scooby is truly better off where she is now.

So thanks again to everyone who offered their help. It was a heartbreaking decision, and I am certainly not one who is in favor of "getting rid" of animals... but I think anyone in my position with 4 kids would understand how a dog with a history of biting cannot be a part of our household. Thanks goodness she was able to find another forever home!

Congratulatory Dinner

Our small hospital does offer at least one benefit when you have a baby there: the congratulatory dinner. They have a woman who caters a dinner, and the nurses give you a choice if you want baby to join in or be babysat at the nurse's station to give mom and dad a "date". Although the setting is in the hospital, they take you down to a special room that overlooks the city, and we're not talking about hospital food! This is gourmet, delicious, and for dessert, a cake to celebrate baby's arrival. The dinner was so good when we had my 21-month-old that I told my husband we have to take pictures next time because it was hard for our friends to believe that food this good existed in our small town. But it does, and here are the pictures to prove it! I only wish they sold it in the hospital cafeteria on a regular basis – now that would totally redefine the term "hospital food"! By the way, those are

giant shrimp in the picture that tasted like lobster; complete with a vat of butter for dipping. And that isn't a bottle of wine but sparkling grape juice, in case you were wondering why they would give a breastfeeding mom a bottle of wine ☐



An American Girl – The Movie?

Because I have 3 daughters, I am no stranger to the American Girl doll franchise. Given their extremely high price tags, I was once a big opponent, however like any parent, once I saw how much my kids enjoy something, I've changed my mind. Grammie bought our oldest daughter an American Girl doll a few Christmases ago, and then her little sister got one for her birthday, so at least the fighting over who gets to play with the one doll has ended. Their other grandma has made clothes for their dolls, thus saving us money on the really expensive clothes. Overall, the dolls really haven't been that expensive for us, probably because we don't buy them any clothes or accessories; thankfully there isn't a place in our rural area that carries any American Girl doll stuff, so that helps also.

A few weekends ago, I took my girls and a friend to see the new American Girl doll movie, [Kitt Kittredge](#). I wasn't

expecting much, but I just love [Abigail Breslin](#), and I also really like to learn about the Great Depression era. The movie did a great job of portraying life during this period in history, at least to the best of my knowledge. It seemed historically accurate; complete with hobo secrets and terminology. I really enjoyed it – it was a cute little movie, and it even had some twists and turns that I didn't see coming and which supplemented the plot nicely. Abigail Breslin was delightful as always, [Joan Cusack](#) was a riot, and [Stanley Tucci](#) was wonderful as a mysterious magician. Their roles were all well-played along with most others as the movie was very well-cast.

The only problem I had with it was that if you didn't know any better, it didn't seem to have much to do with American Girl, and especially not dolls. But if you know anything about the franchise, it makes sense. Each doll in the series has a "backstory" – she comes from a different background and time period and there are books that explain the backstories. However, on our way to the movie, I asked my girls if they knew what the movie was about, and they suggested that maybe a girl's doll comes to life or something. But like I said, the movie actually had nothing to do with dolls at all – it was the backstory of the doll named Kitt Kittredge. The girls didn't seem disappointed, and only the 8-year-olds got a little rambunctious. I also had an 11-year-old with me who really liked it, and a 4-year-old who seemed to enjoy it also – especially the use of animals in the movie. My 4-year-old daughter LOVED the monkey and his antics.

Overall, it was an entertaining afternoon; well-worth the matinee price for the girls to see it, and I was entertained as well. My husband didn't want any part of it, so he stayed home with our 21-month-old who can't sit through movies anyway. But it's a good family movie; although it might add some wishes to my girls' list when they visit the American Girl doll store in Chicago with their grandma next week – not

an accident on the part of the American Girl doll franchise, I'm sure.

A Teacher CANNOT...

...tape a student to a chair. That's the lesson an Illinois man is learning after being sentenced to probation following an incident in a McHenry County classroom. Sorry Derek – this is really a story for your blog... you have my permission to steal it. Hopefully they cover not taping kids, especially special education students, to their chairs in Substitute Teaching 101? Here is the full story:

Substitute Teacher Gets Probation For Taping Unruly Student To Seat

A substitute teacher who taped a pair of rambunctious 8-year-old special education students to their seats was spared forced confinement himself Tuesday when a judge sentenced him to probation instead of prison on a pair of felony convictions.

Matthew Konetski, 32, of South Beloit, Ill., must serve two years probation, pay a \$1,500 fine and perform 80 hours public service under the sentence handed down by a McHenry County judge.

The sentence comes about six weeks after a jury found Konetski guilty of aggravated battery and unlawful restraint for a March 2006 incident in which he taped one of his students at Harvard's Jefferson Elementary School to his seat, then put tape over the boy's mouth when the boy would not sit still.

The taping, according to trial testimony, lasted between two

and five minutes.

Authorities initially charged Konetski with doing the same to a second student, but prosecutors opted not to go to trial on those allegations.

The mother of the boy whose case did go to trial said she is satisfied with the sentence.

“I never wanted to put him in jail,” she said. “I just wanted him held accountable.”

In a letter to the court, the mother said her son, who’s been diagnosed with Pervasive Developmental Disorder, began acting out after the incident. At one point, she writes, the boy was hospitalized for more than 30 days.

“(He), 26 months later, still wakes up screaming ‘Let me go!,’” the letter states.

During his trial, Konetski testified that he taped the boys as a last resort when they would not stop getting up in class. Although he was a first-year substitute with no special education training, Konetski was left alone with the special education students without two aides normally assigned to the class.

He apologized Tuesday for his actions, saying he never intended to harm or scare the boys.

“I was just trying to come up with a way to deal with a situation I didn’t know how to deal with,” he said.

County prosecutors had asked for a jail sentence along with the probation term, saying a stiff sentence would send a message to the public.

“(The victim) experienced being confined in his chair that day by this defendant,” Assistant McHenry County State’s Attorney Sharyl Eisenstein said. “We feel that he, in turn, should be

confined in the McHenry County jail.”

Konetski will not have to register as a sex offender because, Judge Sharon Prather ruled, there is no evidence his actions were sexually motivated.