

Time and Numbers

Every so often I write something to try to get some of the lurkers, who read my blog, to stop and say hi. This is another of those posts.

I am a numbers person, so I am fascinated by the statistics that are generated for this blog. Some topics seem to bring more people. Books, Haunted houses, Star Wars, Indiana Jones, Moon Landings are all big draws. Big of course is a relative term. This blog has been averaging about 15 readers per day. My maximum in 1 day (that I know of) was just over 80. The average this week was around 25. I realize that some of the 'readers' I am seeing are just robots or data mining sites, but when they find something that, in the programming, is found interesting, they leave blog replies. Some of the people who come to read just won't do it.

I know a couple of the 'shy' people, and I don't really expect replies from them (they know who they are). There are others that I think would be very interesting to hear from.

Things I would like to know about you. How did you find this blog? What do you want to read here? What country/state are you from? Do you come back often? Am I boring you? Just pop in to say hello. Again, until you are 'vetted' (good political term, no?) your replies will only be seen by me, or maybe the owner of the place, he once 'hacked' in for a April Fools joke... But he is a good friend of mine, almost like a long lost brother. So if you don't want them to be seen, let me know in the response, and I'll get rid of it. Me, I'm just curious...

Other things I want to know. Why is a site in Russia interested in my blogs on Superman Movies? Why isn't the same site interested in Batman? Just wondering..

This is just stuff I was thinking about this Saturday morning...

Loaded with tags, just for fun? Just having a bit of fun, that's what blogging is all about.

Hancock a different kind of superhero

This show has already be hit hard by the critics. Again it was one I thought looked interesting in the reviews. It was almost exactly what I was expecting. There was a surprise or two in the movie, that I will not give away here.

Anyway the basic story is a superhero with a drinking problem. Like superman he can fly, is very strong, and bullets don't seem to hurt him. He tends to do more destruction than most superheroes and is not in good favor of the city officials. In fact there is a warrant for his arrest.

He does save a struggling ad man who decides to revamp his image. I liked the struggle Hancock had with his personal problems. Even though he was physically superior to normal humans, his emotional levels are not up to normal human par. A good portion of the movie is dealing with this emotional problems, and this did make it slow at times , but I did like that part After Hancock works through his problems, the movie takes off again. And into the couple of surprises I mentioned.

Anyway I think for adults this is just a fun movie. It really won't get you thinking, it is way to spend an afternoon or evening. There is some adult humor, and some violence. The main character is a drunk at the beginning of the movie, so that may be a factor in your viewing pleasure.

So all in all it is a good movie, not up to par with the best superhero movies, but definitely well above the worst. If you don't go into it looking for too much, you may have as much fun as I did.

The surprise plot twists are also interesting.

Remake of a movie

Every once in a while a remake is made of a movie. Most of the time it is because the first movie was very good, and they think the remake will be as good. Such movies that come to my mind are "The Thomas Crown Affair" ([1999](#) and [1968](#)) and "Oceans Eleven" ([2001](#) and [1960](#)). Today I saw a remake of an different sort. One that was made because the first movie wasn't everything it could be. Today I saw "The Incredible Hulk" ([2008](#)).

I'm going to try very hard not to give any big spoilers, I won't tell you the end or anything about the big battle we all know I HULK movie should have. I just want to talk about what was done right this time. The original HULK movie was one I barely mention that I saw. From somebody who really likes comic book movies (see other posts – shameless plug for my own writing), The first Hulk really does not exist for me other than a bad dream.

So what did the 2008 version of the HULK have? Let's start with the most important need of any movie. It had a very good story line and plot. The action of the plot drove the characters. The characters seemed to react and not act. All the characters, from the leads to the cameos and the supporting to the CGI actors were believable. Could I tell it was a CGI character, sure, but that did not detract from the

movie (Its about a comic book, should that really make a difference?) But the CGI characters were believable. They had expression and enough realism to be considered as other parts of the story. This had a lot to do with the quality of the story in addition to the quality of the actors.

Now on to the characters. I've seen most of the main characters in at least one other movie. Some of these movies were very memorable. I didn't see those characters in this movie. Again this is one of my best compliments to actors and writers. I don't want to see an Elf princess as a respected scientist, love interest in a movie that has no elves. I don't want to see an illusionist as a studious scientist either. I didn't see that. They became their characters, and the story drove them, or they drove the story. This would have been a good movie even if the comic never existed.

My rating -- This will be one I see again in the expensive (stadium seating) theater. That, of course, means the DVD will join my collection.

Slight spoilers... Things I liked because I liked the campy TV show... And I like comics

Bruce Banner's eyes when he changes to the Hulk look very similar to the old TV show.

The lab equipment that is used to create the Hulk also looks a lot like the old TV show.

At the beginning of the movie, Bruce Banner is watching TV, a clip from the old Bill Bixby TV show "The Courtship of Eddie's Father" is on.

Bruce Banner using the line or trying "You won't like me when I'm angry"

Lou Ferrigno's cameo and his being the Voice of the Hulk.

Stan Lee's Cameo.

Tony Stark showing up during the movie.

The super soldier serum from WWII is mentioned.

There were others, but I can't remember them now.

More on the movies

I was just wondering why movies based on comic books always start with the character introduction. Why do we go back to Superman getting sent to Earth? Why see Batman's parents shot over and over again? Why see Peter Parker get bit by that spider? Why go into all of this?

I realize that not everyone has read the comic books that these characters are based on, and they do need to know a little about the character, but can't there be a better way?

What got me thinking on this was one of my favorite movies has a larger than life hero. In the first movie, we weren't given a big background on his character. He was just there, larger than life and doing many things just in the first 5-10 minutes of the movie... It took Peter Parker 1/2 the movie before he even became Spiderman. The first Batman movie with Michael Keaton was actually good in this, but Batman Begins went to the Introduction again...

Why can't we have a Super Hero movie, where the first time we see the character he is already the Hero. (Again, Batman with Michael Keaton did this, and so did "V for Vendetta".) If we really need the back story, it can be filled in with short flash backs or dialog on screen. I think it would be more fun for the general audience just to see the characters unfold. To

learn their strengths and weaknesses as the movie unfolds.

Until putting these thoughts down, I never really understood why this is now the standard practice for all “Superhero” movies. I now have a theory. Superhero movies are done in this fashion for the main purpose of selling the sequel. We get an “introduction”, and the design is to leave the movie wanting more. The last 20 minutes or so are filled with the big fight scenes and mass destruction. The audience is left with many unanswered questions (not in that introduction). They are left wanting (maybe subconsciously) more. Then the next movie is released. Just my thoughts.

Oh, that hero that just started doing his thing at the beginning of the movie. The one we didn’t really know much background on until the third movie was released? The one where another movie is soon to be released? That would be Indiana Jones...

Comic Books, Movies and things I think about them

I’ve been watching the Animated Superman DVD’s I picked up. I also went to see [Iron Man](#) last night. So I thought I would try and explain what I like and don’t like in movies/shows based on comic books.

For some insight, I’ve only purchased comic books on rare occasions, most of the time I would borrow them from somebody else. My college roommate was/and still is a collector of comic books. I still go to a sight or two to try to keep up with what is going on. I generally liked most comic books I’ve read, but have really come to appreciate what they can do in

the movies. Finally the movies can make the heroes of the comics do all the things they were able to in those comic pages.

My first objective to any movie, comic book based or otherwise, is very simple: When I leave the movie, did I enjoy myself? Nothing other than that. After that I will start look for other things in the movie. If based on a book or story I know, did it follow the thing it was based on. If not, why not? Was the acting good? Did I see the actor, or the character? That's it, not much deeper than that. This does explain why I've liked movies that other people just can't stand.

For comic book movies, I add one more item. Based on the technology of the day, did the comic action seem real? Why say based on tech, well the latest Superman film released had much better tech than the Superman movies with Christopher Reeve. But for its time, the older Superman movies did as well as they could, they were some of the best SFX during that time frame. I expect more from new movies than I do from older movies.

Now onto the movies...

Most of the Superman animated I've watched have been decent shows. The story lines on some of them would have made better movies than anything released to date. These seem to follow what I remember from the comic books better than any movie has done. In short, I am entertained by them. Well worth the money spent. I will tend to watch some of the shows more often than others, but as a set they are at least a 3 out of 5 stars.

Ironman... I left the movie and could honestly say I had enjoyed it. There were parts that made me do some thinking (planned by the filmmakers of course), but that is what I expected going into the show. As with most of the comic book movies, there is a need to introduce the character to people who never read the

comic. There is the big 3 of course (Superman, Batman and Spiderman) that could have gotten by without the "introduction" movie, but it seems that most others have to have that. Ironman was an introduction movie. We are given a background of the character, and how he became "Ironman", then the major "comic book" action sequence takes place. Without giving too much away, I found that the actors became the characters. Even though I knew most of them from other movies, they became the parts they played. Good writing and acting all around, I give this movie one of my better reviews scores.... I'll buy it when released.

My review scores for movies are (from best to worst) Both See it again categories will mean that I get the DVD later.

See it again (At the high priced place)

See it again (Cheap seats)

Buy the DVD when released

Rent the DVD when released

I'll watch if someone else has it

I don't ever want to see it again

Can I have my money back?

Leave the theater, and never tell anyone I saw it (you won't ever see this review mark, but if you ask about a movie, and I say I haven't seen it. Well I guess I could have, but it was a real stinker in my estimation.)

Recent Movie Ratings...

Spiderman I II and III all were See it again (cheap seats)

Superman Returns that was really a rent when the DVD comes out, but I bought it for my DVD collection of Superman movies
Fantastic Four – same as Superman Returns. I'm collecting Marvel Comic Movies too.

Batman Begins – See it again (cheap seats)

X-Men I, II, and III – See it again (cheap seats)

If you have comic book movies you want my long version review

of, just ask