

Composite Netflix Reviews

{Back in 2008-2009 I wrote a bunch of Netflix reviews. I guess towards the end I stopped posting them. So it's little wonder a little after that, I stopped writing them altogether.}

9-3-08

Reprise

I liked this film. It's like totally artsy and deep (note the sarcasm). If someone ever wanted to turn something I wrote into a movie, I'd be happy to go with the team that did this one (oddly not sarcasm). It's a visual treat, the music is fun, and you get to see a Norwegian girl nekid! What more do you need? As to the plot, it's fairly pointless. Both the beginning and the end are open ended and vague, which has the advantage that you can work it out in your mind however you want, but if you don't like that sort of ambiguity, the end will be highly unsatisfying... and I mean like totally unsatisfying, as in that's it? What the? Come on, you're missing a scene or two here guys. Anyhow, the last point that bears mentioning is that it's a bum trip. This isn't a happy-happy film. No one does much smiling and for the most part the characters aren't given any reason to smile.

5-3-09

{ironic that I didn't note the movie name}

I was unable to enjoy this movie. It has an ever-present narrative voiceover that attempts to morph the story into a morality play. "Have you ever hated a movie? I mean, really hated a movie? So much so that you ended up hitting the eject button? And never really much cared how the stupid thing ended?" If so, you may be able to comprehend my review.

5-3-09

{all things considered, I should have made note of the name...}

For me the question was: Should I watch this documentary or one of his films instead, say *The Bank Dick* or *My Little Chickadee*. I watched this first and then *The Bank Dick*. This documentary was better. It was funnier. It's basically a gag reel with a little history thrown in for color. If you're looking for personal insights into the man, you'll probably be a little disappointed. But if you're looking for an overview of his career jumping from joke to joke, I believe you will be delighted.

5-3-09

{I think it was some sort of college frat party movie...}

The one liners are good. I laughed. I thought it was funny. Around the 50 minute mark or so, someone got a concussion, which is too bad. Maybe they changed writers or told the one they had to change the ending. Whatever. Once you stop laughing, it's time to stop watching this movie. It doesn't get any better towards the end. It just gets stupider and more moronic. Oh, and the girls stop taking off their clothes.

5-7-09

I Heart Huckabees

(***)

As the end credits rolled, I found myself pondering the musical side of the movie industry. Which is simply another way of saying, nothing else particularly stood out about this movie to occupy my mind: not the acting (halting at first), not the plot (it's OK, but uninspired), and certainly not the ideas behind this existential mystery (nothing new here... as if there could be). If you go in with low expectations, you just might be delighted.

5-10-09

K-Pax

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K-Pax is a sort of psychoanalyst murder mystery. The patient may (or may not) be an alien from the stars, but even if he is, he seems quite content to spend his time on Earth in a mental institution. While the psychiatrist (who may or may not have graduated at the very bottom of his class) fails to follow the most basic of psychiatric protocols. Believe it or not, John Doe -- excuse me, Prot -- is allowed to go on numerous "field trips" even though he was involuntary committed; his identity is unknown; he's non-cooperative; and he's not responding to treatment. Realistic? I think not. The questions the movie raises may be compelling, but they are definitely not presented in a compelling manner.

{If I remember correctly, the 'field trips' in question are unsupervised, solitary time away from the institution. You know, because 'involuntary committed' and having to stay on the premises would have gotten in the way of -- and I use the term loosely here -- the plot.}

5-15-09

Heathcliff

I'm not such a big fan of Wuthering Heights. It's more of a tale of madness, hate, and revenge than anything else; and to me, the book was always just sort of an outline for a love story that didn't quite work. As such, I believe the changes the movie made move the plot in the right direction, but they didn't take it far enough. Which is to say, at this point I think I'd rather see Wuthering Heights from Catherine's perspective than Heathcliff's. Also, for those of us who have motion sickness issues, be forewarned: this movie is filmed in Nauso-Rama a good 10-20% of the time.

5-16-09

King of California

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An insane genius: now there's a writer's dilemma. How do you adequately portray a character as both insane and brilliant? Unfortunately, King of California doesn't answer this question. It's fun enough -- worth the three stars -- but not inspired. In the end, the movie might have worked better had we been dealing with an eccentric genius or if we had been given some clue as to when the father was being brilliant and when he was merely off his meds. As it is, the ending is unsatisfactory and I'm left with the impression that Costco funded this movie. That's fine by me. I'm OK with Costco spending their marketing dollars on movies, but please, on movies that work. Unfortunately when ALL is said and done, the inclusion of Costco as a major locale in this movie doesn't make any sense... but I guess that was a clever bit of irony on the part of the screenwriter: the lead character is, after all, insane.

5-18-09

SLC Punk

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SLC Punk is a movie that pedals in nostalgia for a time that never was and a place that never existed. The editing sucks. The camera work is shaky. And talk about unrealistic, it's obvious they weren't trying to make a documentary here. It's almost -- EXACTLY -- as if a middle aged drunk was regaling his buddies with stories of his youth. And for the entertainment of all, he is liberally embellishing his paltry existence with stories of sexual conquests that never happened and fights that never took place. It's a personal revisionist history of what could have been, of what should have been. That's the point and that's the fun. It's also probably not reason enough to give the movie four stars, so let me

tell you what pushed it over the edge for me. It was the party scene where the narrator walks us around the room and introduces us to everyone present. That scene is executed masterfully. And for all you posers out there who didn't like this movie, all I have to say -- screaming at the top of my lungs -- is, "ANARCHY IN THE UK!!! ANARCHY IN THE UK!!! ANARCHY IN THE UK!!!" I think that establishes my credentials... posers.

5-19-09

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Empire Records, 5-19-09

The dance sequences and occasional flights of fancy are what make Empire Records. Almost everything connected with the plot and plot development is inane and boring. I believe it's best to treat the movie as you would a variety show. If you don't enjoy the first few dance/montage sequences, there is absolutely no reason to keep on watching, cause its only going to get worse.

5-20-09 (not posted)

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Lost in Austen

Funny. Astonishingly diverting. A must see for any fan of Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice. All of the characters have been slightly reinvented as if they were real people and Jane Austen had merely created caricatures of them. The interpretation of Mr. Collins is utterly fantastic. The plot sucks though, and not just because it doesn't follow the book. This is a comedy, and when given the choice of a joke or having something make sense, the writers went with the joke. The disconnects add up after a while, but if you're willing to accept the movie for what it is, this isn't such a big deal. Not worth more than three stars if you're not a fan of the genre, and most of the movie was shot with a handheld

camera giving it that drunken sailor feel -- something to keep in mind if you have motion sickness issues.

9-24-09 (not accepted by Netflix as too long)

The Whitest Kids U'know

The 3rd show of the 1st series is the best of the bunch. And the Launch-Pad Rocket Sketch (towards the end of 1-3) is where this series peaks. It's simply hilarious... and if you don't think so, The Whitest Kids is probably not for you. After the first five episodes of the first season (1-1 through 1-5) the series rapidly declines. The second season is not worth watching. I stopped halfway through (at 2-5) with only a few giggles and smirks to show for my time. If you are interested in seeing what went wrong with the series, jump ahead to the third season episode three (3-3), which I did on the recommendation of another reviewer. The Water Balloon Sketch (the first sketch in this episode) is pleasing, the timing is good, but it lasts far too long. The set-up is ridiculously boring. OK, I get it, already. He's a modern salesman stuck in the Wild West. How funny is that? Well, now that you mention it, not very. And the rest of the episode is just plain boring: not funny, not witty, not promising, not offensive (well, maybe to some); but mostly, just plain boring. Overall the series is like is going to Skit Night at Summer Camp when the councilors are away and the campers get to say and do whatever they want on stage. Unfortunately, after a few shows The Whitest Kids ran out of things to say. And worse yet, their sense of comedic timing seems to have evaporated completely by the time the third season rolls around. OK. OK. OK. I get it. He's a traveling salesman in the Wild West. Does this skit have a point? Or is the average viewer so wasted that it takes them a good minute and a half to realize: that yes, we are in the Wild West; and yes, the man in the booth is selling something. But what? Hmm? I wonder. After a boring interlude it is revealed that he is selling water balloons. Funny, right? Classic! But don't worry, I haven't ruined the gag,

because the fact that he is selling water balloons isn't the joke, it's the set up, and although the skit is fun (maybe even funny), it takes way too long to get rolling.

{The launch pad rocket sketch was great, though. I nearly bust a gut laughing. See, they're astronauts on the launch pad and... eh, I won't ruin it for you. Go check it out.}

*And just out of curiosity, I wonder:
What the average number of reviews on Netflix is?
The average percentage of titles that folks review?
And lastly, the average number of words in reviews?
Do folks just sort of devolve into:
'Funny'
'Great'
'First Episode was better'*

I myself, no longer have a Netflix account and am less likely than ever to contribute (unpaid) to someone else's site.}

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