

## Movie Rantings

Library Detective

By Stacey Anter

For The Woman's Page

As I am no Andy Rooney, I don't usually like to get on my soapbox and complain about things but this is one of those times. Now that the summer movie releases are playing everywhere, I've been going to the movies more often than normal. And with some annoyances that come with movie going, I feel the need to rant. There are some good things about the movies coming out this summer, such as the ever-popular practice of turning books into films, like *The Devil Wears Prada*, *The Ant Bully*, and *How To Eat Fried Worms*, but there are definitely some things we could all do without.

Commercials, for instance, are pet peeve number one. When I go to the movies, I don't mind watching movie previews, or even clips for donation requests for the Jimmy Fund, but television commercials I DO mind. If I wanted to watch advertisements for Mountain Dew, MovieTickets.com, Verizon, and others, I would have saved myself the \$6.75 (matinee) and \$9.75 and stayed home. I'd love to go back to the days when Bugs Bunny cartoons or the Three Stooges shorts would be shown before the movie. Sort of like an opening act before the feature. Instead, we get bombarded with ads of all kinds.

Pet peeve number two is product placement in movies. Like it or not, *The Devil Wears Prada* is one big advertisement for designer clothes. *Click*, which I thought was a funny movie with a good heartfelt message, was clearly used as ad space on behalf of Bed, Bath and Beyond, and Twinkies. I understand that people use certain products and the props and scenery need to be as realistic as possible, but panning the camera to a desk with a Diet Coke on it, strategically placed facing the camera, is a little annoying when it has no relation to the storyline.

Movie pricing is outrageous, and therefore it's pet peeve number three. The cost of going to the movies, \$6.75 or \$9.75, depending on your timing, has steadily increased over the last few years, not unlike the price of gas. Pretty soon, we'll need to charge a night at the movies on a credit card, or even take out a small loan, or perhaps open a savings account just to go see the new Pirates of the Caribbean movie. If it weren't for the AAA movie passes, and let's not forget the oh-so-lucky movie pass-winning friends of mine (God Bless them) I would probably be on my way back to the land of deep debt all in the name of entertainment. Now, one small reprieve in all this is the discount movie theatre. One example is the Patriot Cinema in East Providence, which some of us may remember as the Four Seasons Cinema. The price for a movie is only \$1.99, and the only drawback is having to wait a couple of months for the movie to play at any discount theatre. And gee, if you're even more patient, you can rent it (or borrow it for free from the library) when it comes out on DVD, plus you can skip through the commercials. Forward scan is a beautiful thing.

Pet peeve number four is the new policy that many, if not all, movie theaters are adopting: “No Food or Beverages” can be brought into the theater. This policy forces moviegoers to buy drinks and snacks at the obscenely overpriced concession stands. Sure the offer to “upgrade” your small soda to a medium soda for “25 cents more” sounds like we’re getting a bargain, but believe me, folks, \$4 for a medium soda is not a bargain no matter how you look at it. What if I were a diabetic, watching my weight, and allergic to popcorn? I would have no choice but to sneak in foods that I can eat if I wanted a snack during the movie. But what would the manager do if I did? Throw me out? How about throwing out those people who answer their ringing cell phones, or those who keep opening up their phone, which annoyingly glares in the complete darkness of the theater, to check messages, time, etc?

I’m not saying that I will never visit another movie theater again. If I want to see a movie bad enough, or if I happen upon movie passes, I’ll just have to endure all of the commercials, high prices, and the occasional annoying moviegoer to see it. If you don’t feel like dealing with any and all of these annoyances, feel free to visit your local library and borrow a movie, for free, then you can eat whatever snacks you want, and you can zip past the commercials to get to the good stuff.

I call myself the Library Detective because I can find the answers to any question you can think of, or at least I can point you in the right direction. To find out more about summer movies, visit your local library; there are more Library Detectives there, too. Now you can read my previous columns, as I have compiled them in a Blog (<http://librarydetective.blogspot.com>). If you have any questions or comments, feel free to email me at [StaceyAnter@cox.net](mailto:StaceyAnter@cox.net).