Sample reviews

Fist Fight

Reviewed by A.Majors

#Teacherfight can be heard throughout the film, which itself is funny to see as a hashtag and speaks to the absurdity of how the world is today. We are overly consumed by technology and social media, which is touched on a lot in the new comedy “Fist Fight”. Whether it is the funny YouTube videos or the hilarious tweets, we see how fast word can spread about everything and in this case a skirmish between Mr. Strickland (Ice Cube) and Mr. Campbell (Charlie Day). Both actors are playing versions of characters we have seen before, which is the good part about the movie and the bad. More of the same, Ice Cube acts like the angry tough guy while Charlie Day is the lovable goof. Nothing wrong with each in their respective roles but you know what to expect thus not bringing anything new under the sun. This spills over to the rest of the other cast especially Tracy Morgan who is playing essentially the same character as always …Tracy Morgan. Luckily everyone is on their “A” game which makes the movie quite funny even when you see the jokes coming a mile away. Ice Cube and Charlie’s dynamic is what really drives the film as they make their squabble believable and manage to embed some deep meaning behind what might appear as a simple misunderstanding. Strickland feels that Campbell needs to be man and Mr. Campbell is trying not to be a pushover and finally grow a pair. Watching the two go back and forth with Strickland trying to make sure the fight happens, while Campbell tries everything to get out of it all together (even trying to call 911 about being bullied) surely is what keeps the story from falling flat. The early portion of the movie has a few gems of humor but the last act is where things really get going, I won’t spoil anything but there is a musical number that will have you in tears from laughing and the final fight is well worth the price of admission. No reinvention of the wheel but a generally funny take on familiar tropes is what makes Fist Fight a solid comedy for the start of 2017.

Grade:B-



O.J: Made In America

Reviewed by A.Majors

A few weeks ago I had the chance to meet with director [Ezra Edelman](https://www.google.com/search?espv=2&biw=1242&bih=606&q=Ezra+Edelman&stick=H4sIAAAAAAAAAOPgE-LVT9c3NEzOSS_MyLLMVuLSz9U3SCo2jk-x1BLLTrbST8vMyQUTVimZRanJJflFAAjwenw1AAAA&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiDjra0gJnNAhUHLmMKHb_fBgUQmxMIjQEoATAR) at a private screening for the first installment of his five part docu-series O.J: Made In America. When the show starts you are immediately sucked into the atmosphere of the 1960’s and the west coast during that time, whether it is the hippie fashion, grainy television broadcasts or the images of civil unrest, you feel like you are given a front row seat to what is happening and you cannot help but be engrossed. We are then taken back to when young O.J is born in the late 40’s along with some friends and family that gives insight into his upbringing and his superstar attitude. I must say, people act shocked about how Kanye overstates his ego but trust me O.J. made the blueprint. Simpson, from the time he was a child knew he was destined to be great, even joking with his childhood friends that “your kids will be fighting over my jersey one day!”.

The real gem is seeing O.J. not being the braggart but him trying to transcend race, especially at a time when the racial tensions are high and there is rioting in Watts. Seeing O.J. try and be seen as a person and not so much as just a black person really helps you get into his mindset and helps you understand some of his motives and actions. It is weird because at times O.J. is all about team and cohesion other times it’s all about “The Juice”. Part one is 90 minutes and after you will be anxious for the next installment. Made in America is entertaining as well as informative. A must see I look forward to the rest of the series.

Grade :A



Reviewed by A.Majors

Last year, via The Conjuring, we were introduced to the creepy and evil decorative doll, Annabelle. The Conjuring only gave us a brief look at the dolls story; now we get more insight into how she came to be.

Our story begins with a young couple (John and Mia Gordan) on the verge of having their first child. We see the couple attend church with their neighbors. The neighbors give the young couple advice on raising a child and then quickly scurry home.  From there, we learn that they had a child but she joined a cult. Later, we see her and an unnamed man kill her parents and then turn focus on the young couple. The resulting skirmish leaves Mia stabbed, the male intruder dead, and the neighbors’ daughter dead of an apparent ritualistic suicide. This sets the story of the film as her blood gets in Annabelle and the havoc ensues. The scares are really amped up in this prequel; even more than we saw in The Conjuring (the elevator scene is just downright frightening). Where The Conjuring was more cerebral with its horror, Annabelle is more visual in that it focuses on jumps and scary imagery over story and character development.

Most of the cast is fine, especially, John (Ward Horton) and Evelyn (Alfre Woodard). The only actor who just falls flat is Mia (Annabelle Wallis) (her name is Annabelle lol…sorry). She is never more than the damsel in distress and really just brings the film down. This is along with the predictability you encounter in the film’s final act.  Overall, it’s a decent movie with some good scares.

Grade: C

