

# “Despicable Me 3”

By Helen Lutz

WARNING ... I'm climbing atop my soap box and becoming my mother (and grandmother and probably great grandmother had I had the opportunity to meet her). I remember the ladies saying time and again, “What’s this world coming to?” I find myself with the same thought when looking at current events. There was a time, not so very long ago, that corporate America produced good products and provided good services at fair prices. It is unfortunate that now our American corporate culture has devolved into one of greed. Just look at the actions taken by Shkreli to line his pockets and increase the profits of Turing Pharmaceuticals. Volkswagen did a fabulous job of tricking everyone about its emissions in the name of profit. Now that the price for airline fuel is at one of its lowest rates in years, we still get hit for all the extra fees for bags, pillows and I’m afraid there may even be a coin slot installed on the bathroom door when we take our next vacation; all in the name of corporate greed. Why provide innovative products and better service when you’ve learned that the public will actually pay for the status quo?



Hollywood has fallen into the same trap as the rest of corporate America with its willingness to promote the status quo. Look at all the franchise films released. When one does well, certainly Number 2 will do better ... and then Number 3 ... and then Number 729 (at least that’s how the “Halloween” franchise feels). “Despicable Me” offers a fun-filled story about a villain, his minions, and three heart-stealing orphans. So, “Despicable Me 2” offers a soft-hearted villain turned good guy raising three heart-stealing orphans – and his minions. Now “Despicable Me 3” comes to us again with a twist – our villain turned good guy has a twin; a very successful twin, not as much about the girls, and not as much fun with the minions.

As “Despicable Me 3” begins, Gru (voiced by Steve Carell) and his new wife Lucy (voiced by Kristen Wiig) are hot on the trail of one of the world’s worst villains Balthazar Bratt (voiced by Trey Parker). As a child, Bratt was a superstar in “Evil Bratt,” loved by many and complete with action figures; he was a “Bad Boy.” However, as Bratt began to get pimples and his voice changed, he was left behind by Hollywood, out of the limelight, causing him to turn toward a life of crime – he’s still a bad boy with a bald spot. Bratt’s plan to steal an enormous diamond is foiled by Gru and Lucy only to be outfoxed by a sneaky Bratt as an appraiser (he is an actor).

Upon their return to the Anti-Villain League, Gru and Lucy are promptly fired by the new commander. Not knowing what to do with himself, Gru is surprised to learn that he has a twin brother – separated at birth. Off goes the family to meet Gru’s brother Dru (also voiced by Carell) and visit his village of happy pigs. Living in the lap of luxury Gru’s family members find themselves in search of many quests; live unicorns, motherhood, and villainy. Dru has always failed at being a villain and pushes Gru to help him pull off a wonderfully evil heist – and he has the neat villain toys to do it.

The minions play a much smaller role in “Despicable Me 3” but do find themselves on the wrong side of the law landing them in a French prison. It is a prison which they immediately take over – don’t mess with the minions. “Despicable Me 3” expands the story of Gru, yet lacks its original charm. The girls have minor roles; the minions have almost no role. Gru and Dru are center stage taking “Despicable Me 3” to the verge of silliness at times. On a scale of one to four Hart Beats I give “Despicable Me 3” TWO 1/2 HARTS. There is something for all ages, but we sometimes have to look for it.