

# Entertainment

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## Fried Green Tomatoes perfect in can

By Lawson Oates and Dawn Wood

Fried Green Tomatoes (watched on video) is based on the novel Fried Green Tomatoes at the Whistle Stop Cafe, by American writer Fannie Flagg. We had to see if the movie could challenge the novel's brilliant character development. We were not disappointed.

The story is set in a small town called Whistle Stop, Alabama, during the '20's and '30's. The story is told by Ninny Threadgood (Jessica Tandy), a widowed senior in a nursing home, to Evelyn Couch (Kathy Bates), a middle-class housewife coming to terms with her identity in the '80's. Couch is fascinated by the tales of the managers of the cafe in Whistle Stop and the events that take place in the small town.

At the core of the story are the lives of Iddie Threadgood (Ninny's sister-in-law) and Ruth Jamison. After jointly witnessing the tragic death of Iddie's brother, the two follow a checkered friendship that climaxes in the rescue of Ruth from her wife-beating husband. The two then open the Whistle Stop Cafe, but are hounded by the mysterious

death of Ruth's husband, visits by the Ku Klux Klan from Georgia, and social problems ranging from racial tensions to class snobbery towards Depression drifters.

Their personal relationship is in no way celebrated for its physical component, but for its spiritual component. The movie only hints at the relationship using such devices as ties on Iddie and her turning down of overtures from men to identify her masculine orientation.

The other side of the movie, the liberation of Evelyn, blossoms with humor. From a chocolate bar-eating nervous wreck, Evelyn is coached by

Ninny into a dynamic cosmetics salesperson who explores her identity through renovations and a mystical female superhero called Towanda, who rights wrongs against women across the land.

Under the guidance of veteran Executive Producer Norman Lear, the difficult task of turning around a novel into a movie and maintaining its emotional impact has been achieved. The screenplay was done by Flagg and Carol Sobieski. They were able to pull the most memorable moments from the novel and shape them into a movie screenplay. Director Jon Aunet was blessed with a stel-

lar cast that carry away every scene. Jessica Tandy, fresh from her Oscar performance in Driving Miss Daisy, is graceful and yet powerful in her delivery. She does it with ease.

Additional strong performances are presented by Cicely Tyson (as Sipsy, the cook), Gary Basaraba (as Grady Kilgore, the town sheriff) and Stan Shaw (as Big George, who cooks the barbecued meats).

If you are looking for an excellent video, then Fried Green Tomatoes is for you. It is available at a number of local video outlets.

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## Movie etiquette a thing of the past

By Patrick Freestone

During the filming of a feature film, nine microphones will have to be replaced. The heads of the sound recorder will be cleaned 287 times. These facts, among others, are presented in a new trailer currently being screened at selected Cineplex Odeon theatres. It is not an advertisement for a new sound system, but rather a plea for silence during the feature presentation.

The trailer is a response by Cineplex Odeon to try and stop the growing problem of

unnecessary talk during a movie. However, the problem of talking during a feature film is really only a part of the story of the deterioration of the movie-going experience.

It began in the late '50's with the rise of the suburbs and the first multiplex cinemas.

Gone were the movie palaces where patrons wove through a series of elaborately decorated vestibules, foyers, lobbys, lounges, promenades, and waiting rooms designed to impress and excite.

The rise of the multiplex meant the shoe-horning of as many auditoria into the corner of a shopping centre as it could handle. The lobby was eliminated, replaced by the stores and shops in the mall. A cluster of unadorned screening rooms offered only feature films and concession stands offered the patron no architectural fantasy.

By the early '70's the homogenous multiplex was entrenched and the days the cinema itself could excite and delight the audience were gone.

In the '80's the VCR became affordable. Soon every household had one on which feature films could be enjoyed. The movie-going experience was no longer exclusive to the

move theatre. The living-room became the theatre; a theatre free of long ticket and concession lines. A theatre where constant talking and moving about is permitted. If something is missed, all you have to do is hit the rewind button.

This behavior is transferred to the movie theatre. And why not? It's easy to confuse the living-room with the multiplex cinema. Forgotten is basic movie-watching etiquette. When talking results in something being missed, the murmurs begin, "What'd I miss?" "What'd he say?" and finally, "Quick, hit the rewind button".

Also, I think there is a correlation to the fact we don't read books much anymore. Reading demands a fair amount of engagement of the mind and imagination. A film, like a book, demands a commitment on the part of the viewers. The viewer must give himself over to the film. This requires concentration; concentration not required at home. While noble, the efforts of Cineplex Odeon strike me as being similar to spitting into the wind. After all, it was Cineplex Odeon that first introduced the multiplex to Canada. They also own the mother of all multiplex, the 17 screens at the Eaton Centre Cineplex Odeon.

Perhaps they are architects of their own destruction. As long as talking continues, patrons will stay away.

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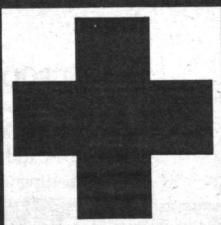
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CINEMA 2 **ROOKIE OF THE YEAR**  
 SAT. & SUN. 2 P.M. & 4 P.M.  
 NIGHTLY 7 & 9 P.M. [PG]

CINEMA 3 **FREE WILLY**  
 SAT. & SUN. 1:30 P.M.  
 NIGHTLY 7 P.M. [F]

CINEMA 3 **JURASSIC PARK**  
 SAT. & SUN. 3 P.M.  
 NIGHTLY 9 P.M. [PG]

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