

I Think I Saw a Good Movie, but I Can't Quite Remember

By Janine Annett

Earlier today, I heard a sentence I've heard my mother say hundreds of times. "What was the name of that movie again?" Except this time, she wasn't the one who'd said it. It was me! When did I turn into my mother? Gradually, I suppose. First, I became a mother myself. Next I'll be saying, "You know the movie, the one with what's-his-name in it. The actor?"

Recently, I can't remember for the life of me the names of any movies. I mean, in my defense, I so rarely watch "grown up" movies these days; Pixar takes all my movie money. But somehow, I watched a film recently with my husband about the CIA and the war on drugs; I really couldn't tell you what it was called or who was in it. I found the plot difficult to follow, and I was concerned when I realized I was one step away from whisper-yelling, "What's going on?" (Just like my mother!) My husband later concurred that the plot did get a little loopy at times during this film. In the end, it all resolved nicely. Just don't ask me how.

We watched another movie that I do remember starred Brad Pitt. It was based on a true story; he played a U.S. general involved in the war in Afghanistan. Not only can I not remember the name of the movie, I can't remember the fictionalized name or the real-life name of the general. The movie was based on a magazine article that later became a book, but I couldn't tell you the name of the article, the book, or the author of the article/book.

A colleague of mine recently recommended a movie to me, but I forgot the name of it. Something about money? I asked her to tell me again a few days later, then I promptly forgot it (I was going to write it down, but I forgot to do that). I tried to tell my husband about the movie, but all I could come up with was, "She said it's really good – it's about, well, I forget exactly." Who was in it? I couldn't remember. To quote the



late, great Nora Ephron (who wrote a bunch of movies, but don't ask me to tell you the names of all of them), "I remember nothing."

In her book *Bird by Bird*, the writer Anne Lamott made the observation that if your mind is "perhaps the merest bit disorganized ... it may be that you've had children." She also famously says, "When a child comes out of your body, it arrives with about a fifth of your brain clenched in its little hand."

I tried to repeat this quote to my husband, except I didn't get it quite right. I told him, "Anne Lamott says when you give birth to a child, you lose 30 percent of your brain automatically." He responded, "Well, we only use about 10 percent of our brains anyway." Great, there goes 30 percent of 10 percent, and I can't tell you what 30 percent of 10 percent is, because I can barely remember

how to do math to begin with – and now I have to learn math all over again anyway. Thanks, Common Core and first grade math homework.

So the next time you see a movie – whether it's a kids' movie or a grown-up one, whether you go to the nearest cinema or rent a movie at home – if you don't like it, console yourself with this: You might not remember very much of it. You might not even remember the name of it, or who starred in it, or what it was about. I feel a bit like that fish with no memory. You know, what's-her-name. In that movie. What was it called again?

Janine Annett is a mom and writer and film enthusiast. She would recommend the last good film she saw if only she could remember which one it was.