

If at first you succeed, don't try again



I'm in the midst of my Star Wars weekathon. That is, I'm watching each of the 6 movies on successive days in preparation for viewing The Force Awakens sometime next week.

As I struggled to restrain myself from keeping my finger nearly permanently pressed on the fast forward button, it reminded me how often the sequel (or remake) of older movies is so frequently disappointing (if not flat-out awful).

Starting back to my early movie years, a number of those classic movies of my youth have spawned sequels or been remade. A sampling of memories mostly tarnished follows. (Readers please note the significantly nerdy leaning towards Sci Fi and Horror).

The early years

I may not have caught them all in the theater, but true classics like The Blob, The Thing and Godzilla were standard fare for weekend Creature Feature TV viewing.

All three were remade. Only John Carpenter's The Thing remake was worth watching. The Mathew Broderick Godzilla was gosh awful.

There was also 2001: A Space Odyssey which had a survivable, if unmoving sequel, 2010.

The teen years

This was a big period kicking off Hollywood's (if only) fatal

love affair with sequels.

Of course, this included Star Wars, which successfully serialized two more movies before collapsing in the three "prequels" later on.

Superman started strong and actually picked up steam in its first sequel before falling apart in the last two.

Alien followed almost the exact same path, shifting from horror/suspense to action to ugh.

I can't argue with legions of Godfather fans, but the incomparable Jaws returned with incompetent sequels.

If you could just delete every odd-numbered Star Trek movie, you'd have a good series.

I suppose I could include Rocky here, though it was not on my favorites list, just to point out how bad the last three were (okay, Mr. T is always fun, but it was still bad).

Some that were remade and suffered by association, Chinatown, Willy Wonka, Exorcist

The post-college years

Raiders of the Lost Ark went one movie too long. The Terminator got better and then plummeted. Beverly Hills Cop should have stopped at one. Same with 48 Hours. Ghostbusters hit it out of the park with the marshmallows and should have taken a bow.

Karate Kid should have swept the leg of its sequels. Back to the Future must have seen what its sequel would look like before making it (though #3 wasn't too bad).

Die Hard started falling farther than Alan Rickman after the second movie. Holy bad script did Batman go south after Michelle Pfeiffer. Robocop should have arrested his movie

sequels.

The end of the century years

The Matrix should have unplugged after the first movie. Jurassic Park lost its teeth by the time the third one rolled out.

I'm going to stop here, because it's just so darn depressing to see what Hollywood's greed (or lack of creativity) does to many great original movies. I'm sure you have your own lists (and perhaps disagree with some of mine).

I left out movie series that are not really sequels (such as Lord of the Rings or Harry Potter), but there's plenty of one-offs, too, that I left out (can you say Caddyshack II?).

I hear and read that the early reviews for The Force Awakens are strong. Strong enough to wash away Jar Jar Binks? May the Force be with me!