

'Secret Life of Walter Mitty' Is an Inspiring, Feel-Good Movie

Goldwyn Jr., whose father, the famed Samuel Goldwyn, produced *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* with Danny Kaye in 1947, has updated the classic 1939 short story by James Thurber.

Walter Mitty (Ben Stiller, also the movie's director) is an unremarkable man in a nondescript job down in the dark basement working for *Life* magazine. Day after day, Walter lives his life, often drifting into a world where he is the hero and everything always works out—rather than directly dealing with a life he never envisioned for himself, his mother's (Shirley MacLaine) move to assisted living, his off Broadway hopeful actress sister (Kathryn Hahn) and a crush on recent hire Cheryl Melhoff (Kristen Wiig).

As it happens, *Life* has just been acquired and will convert from print to digital. The last physical issue of the publication is to be released in a couple weeks. Walter, as the negative assets manager—arguably the most depressing job title ever—has the responsibility of handling and processing camera film negatives, from which the final cover photo will originate.

This one final image—as the legendary, film-only, *Life* photographer Sean O'Connell (Sean Penn) describes—is the “quintessential” photo that illustrates the legacy of *Life*'s 124 years.

But when Walter loses the film negative, his job, along with that of his co-worker, are threatened. Walter takes action in the real world, embarking on a global journey that turns into an adventure more extraordinary than anything he could have ever imagined.

I took my 12-year-old- son to see the film, who laughed alongside me and was able to understand pretty much everything. For a father, *The Secret Life of Walter*

Mitty offers several teachable moments, including dealing with a healthy view of oneself, the danger of ignoring your fears and finishing the job well.

I also saw *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* with my beloved wife, and it was just as good the second time around! We laughed in the same places. Our jaws dropped at the same immense, beautiful vistas. The soundtrack by Jose Gonzalez partnered well with the amazing photography. Eyes were wet during the same moments. She loved it, as I expected. This is one of those flicks that will definitely grace my family movie collection when released. There is just something about a movie that leaves you feeling refreshed, uplifted and energized.

Content Watch: *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* is rated PG for some crude comments, language and action violence. I noted a single instance of taking the name of Jesus in vain. Can I recommend *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* as a family friendly movie? Yes, with a caveat. Because the storyline deals with adult life issues, fears and motivations, the smaller set will probably be bored out of their skulls. But for pre-teens and above, I highly recommend it, as the content, while generally non-spiritual, can easily be turned into a useful, teachable moment by an alert parent.

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