

Was Robin Williams a Casualty of Hollywood's Fading Star System?

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Robin Williams had roles in four movies yet to be released. Last year he had a television show. Yet he was still being financially crushed. He went through two divorces when his paychecks were much larger. He joked about alimony really being "all the money."

Not many years ago, being an A-list star meant you could command \$20 million or more for a movie role. Williams was an A-list star.

It's been reported that he dreaded having to do *Mrs. Doubtfire* 2, but that he signed on to the project because he needed the money.

Williams once starred in movies like *Good Morning Vietnam*, *Hook*, *Mrs. Doubtfire* and *Flubber*, where he was the star above the title. His more recent roles, like Teddy Roosevelt, in the *Night at the Museum* movies, though wonderful, were small.

Williams is not the only Hollywood star to lose financial luster.

Will Smith and Johnny Depp recently have suffered flops where their name above the title didn't help. Robert Downey Jr. does spectacularly well, but only when he's Iron Man or Sherlock Holmes. Jim Carrey, a comic talent similar to Robin Williams, is not drawing at the box office as he used to do. Meanwhile, Mel Gibson has virtually been blacklisted.

Where are the movies like *Forrest Gump*, where an incredible

actor gets an incredible role in something other than a CGI extravaganza?

The A-list stars of the 1990s are still tremendous actors, but you don't see them in many A-list movies. Today's A-list movies are about the franchise more than the star. You can substitute one Spider-Man or Batman for another and keep going.

Robin Williams had much more going on in his life than Hollywood's transformation, but that transformation did seem to have an impact on him.

This article originally appeared on . Want to know what God's doing in Hollywood?