

Plaza Triple Theatre

The fourth entry in the Rocky Balboa saga is a major disappointment. Now, don't laugh. I was looking forward to this movie. *Rocky* was a classic, *Rocky II* was very good and *Rocky III* was almost as good as the first one.

But, Sylvester Stallone doesn't make *movies* anymore — he makes cartoons. That wouldn't be so bad except his cartoons are extremely jingoistic and are not particularly exciting.

The very simple plot (all cartoons have simple plots) has Russia entering professional boxing. Its superhuman fighter is a pumped-up monster named Ivan Drago (Dolph Lundgren). An exhibition match is quickly staged between Drago and Apollo Creed, and, as we already know from the commercials, Apollo is creamed.

This makes Rocky very mad, and, when no one will sanction the fight in America, he travels to Russia to train and face Drago in what promises to be "the most-watched sporting event in history."

This sounds fine, but it's almost boring. There are no characters in this movie. The Russians are uniformly evil people that we learn nothing about.

Still, I could count on the final fight scene to be exciting, right? Wrong. It certainly started off in a promising fashion: the idea of Rocky facing this monster surrounded by thousands of Russians chanting "Drago, Drago" was an interesting twist.

But *Rocky IV* quickly lost all hope of redeeming itself. When Rocky doesn't immediately crumble under Drago's blows, the Russians all start chanting "Rocky, Rocky." This is patently absurd.

If I'm going to watch a cartoon, I'd rather see *He-Man*. At least the Lord of Greyskull *knows* he's a cartoon.

— Michael Giltz