



"THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK"



"KRAMER VS. KRAMER"



"THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS"



"THE GREAT SANTINI"

Pop stars from the past

Movie moms may have an edge on screen time, but movie dads — whether playing catch with their son in “Field of Dreams” or searching for their missing child in “Finding Nemo” — have also played memorable roles. And not always helpful ones. So on Father’s Day, let’s focus on the movie dads — good and bad — we’ll never forget.

TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD (1962)

Father Figure: Hero-worshiping your dad is natural for young kids, and it’s given full play in this Deep South tale of prejudice and fear about lawyer Atticus Finch (Gregory Peck), who must defend a black man wrongly accused of raping a white woman.

Good or Bad Dad: Good, if not saintly. Finch is as noble and decent and true as they come. The widowed Finch never lets his work interfere with providing comfort and a timely word of praise to his children.

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK (1980)

Father Figure: Think you’ve got daddy issues? Imagine your dad is the embodiment of all evil.

Good or Bad Dad: Sure, Darth Vader gets reformed just in the nick of time in “Return of the Jedi.” But let’s go with “bad.” He may be all smiles at the end, but his kids are still gonna need a lot of therapy.

KRAMER VS. KRAMER (1979)

Father Figure: Meryl Streep has walked out on Dustin Hoffman, who suddenly finds himself playing Mr. Mom with his young son.

Good or Bad Dad: Good, even when Hoffman

is yelling at his son to not eat that bowl of ice cream. The film helped teach us that even the phrase “Mr. Mom” is insulting because dads can be just as good parents as moms, given the chance.

THE STEPFATHER (1987)

Father Figure: Long before the TV show “Lost,” actor Terry O’Quinn (aka John Locke) created a stir with this stylish horror flick about a conservative man with a yen for marrying single mothers.

Good or Bad Dad: Bad, since the moment his new family doesn’t live up to O’Quinn’s exacting expectations, he slaughters them and moves on. Makes your own dad sound pretty good, doesn’t it?

THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS (2006)

Father Figure: When single dad Will Smith finds himself unable to provide his adorable son Christopher (played by Smith’s son, Jaden) even the barest necessities — at one point they spend the night in a public bathroom — it’s every parent’s worst nightmare.



"TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD"

Good or Bad Dad: Very good. In this quietly moving true story, Smith scratches and claws his way back to a lucrative career, regaining his dignity along with the knowledge that he never lost the respect and love of his son, even at their darkest moments.

THE GREAT SANTINI (1979)

Father Figure: Robert Duvall is a military nightmare of a dad — abusive, demanding and always in the position of authority. His four kids are almost crippled by Duvall’s unceasingly demanding ways, and eldest son Michael O’Keefe has had enough.

Good or Bad Dad: Bad, of course, though you know Duvall is almost incapable of being any other way. The scene where he bounces a basketball off O’Keefe’s head is heartbreakingly cruel. Yet, the movie is truly great because it’s able to see Duvall as more than just a monster.

Michael Giltz