

Love the Coopers Movie Review

- Jacob Keller

Although Christmas is still six weeks away, it comes with no surprise to see a Christmas themed movie release at this time of year. Love the Coopers, one such movie, hit theaters on the 13th. Its trailers and cast, including Diane Keaton, John Goodman, Amanda Seyfried, and Ed Helms, paint the picture of a fun and entertaining comedy. However, taking a trip to the movie theater and sitting down for the full 107 minutes tells a very different tale.

Love the Coopers lacked the focus on comedy that its cast and trailers suggested. Misleadingly, the opening minutes of the movie created a wry atmosphere, which seemed to be supported by including a narrator with the voice of Steve Martin. However, not long into the movie, the directors seem to have forgotten that their film was advertised as comedy. They began to focus on the drama in the many subplots of the movie, which, in turn, meant a lot of time spent with pairs of people in dialogue. Not only did this become boring because of the nature of the scenes, it also became boring because there were so many subplots.

Since the focus was spread too thin, the audience didn't get to know many of the characters well. It was around halfway into the movie when I could actually figure how the characters were related to each other. There was even a point in the movie where I thought two characters were the same person, because they looked similar and their identities hadn't been distinguished. Ultimately, many of the character interactions and outcomes felt like evidence leading to a clichéd conclusion that people aren't happy when they live in the past. The movie was centered around this theme, rather than providing dynamic and likeable people, who we begin to compare and relate to ourselves to develop a message that makes us pleased with the movie. The audience needs to feel like the characters have more value than they did. Emotional connection to the characters was highly limited, even though it was necessary for the angle the director ended up going for- a troubled family coming together in a time of need. Each family member had their own issues and focused on themselves. When they solved these issues, the audience did not feel happiness or relief. When other themes arose, like being the person you want to be, or giving leads to good things, the audience didn't relate to them either. People weren't able to gain or feel much of anything for the movie.

At the end of the movie, when the characters themselves come to these realizations and everybody is happy, dancing, and laughing, everything is tied up in a way that is clichéd--too cute and perfect. The very last scene is the cherry on top that led me to form my opinion on Love the Coopers. The director attempts to bring back the comedic aspect that the trailers promised by ending the movie on what was intended to be a comedic and silly note. However, it ended up being entirely random and irrelevant. This decision captures the director's confusion on whether she wanted the movie to be a comedy or drama. She did not know which to pursue and ultimately "Love the Coopers" failed to do a good job in either of these categories.