

*Reel Raves

(Continued from 3.) suffers ridicule at the hands of his classmates because his father is the evil Garmadon (Justin Theroux). Garmadon is known for his numerous plots to conquer the city of Ninjago, but a team of ninjas, led by Green Ninja, consistently thwarts him. Unknown to all but the ninjas themselves is the fact that Green Ninja is none other than Lloyd. The team of ninjas is mentored and trained by Lloyd's uncle, Master Wu (Jackie Chan), and under his guidance, the ninjas face down Garmadon and his countless henchmen in one epic final battle for Ninjago. It's hard to place my finger on what exactly did not work

in this film, but I think it has to do with its lack of layered humor compared to the earlier films. Those films have so many pop culture references and so much sarcasm that one couldn't help but laugh at the steady barrage of jokes from recognizable voices. While *Ninjago* still has a number of recognizable celebrity voices delivering their lines well (I'm thinking first and foremost of Justin Theroux), the lines themselves just weren't that funny. The world of *Ninjago* did not lend itself to pop culture references like the previous films, no matter how hard the writers tried to force that square peg into a round hole. For example, "Good Morning Ninjago" hosted by Michael Strahan and Robin

Roberts was a recurring bit of pop culture levity, but while the reference itself was clever, there was no true comedic purpose served by these cameos.

I feel confident that *Ninjago* will dull the shine of the Lego franchise for Warner Brothers, but it is my sincere hope that they bounce back from this poor showing to return to their former glory. *Ninjago* serves as a cold reminder that simply throwing together a plot and hiring top actors to voice the characters is not a guarantee of success.

See the movie if your kids are just dying to see it, but if you want a better overall experience, simply watch *The Lego Movie* or *The Lego Batman Movie* at home, even if it's for the millionth time.

* Cary Littlejohn is an attorney at Barrett Law Group, P.A. in Lexington, MS. He is an avid moviegoer, often seeing over 50 movies per year in theaters. He lives in Lexington with his dog, Millie.



The Durant Public Library was recently awarded a grant from the Pilcrow Foundation for 2017 Children's Book Project. The Pilcrow Foundation's mission is to provide new, quality, hardcover children's book to rural public libraries across the United States. As a recipient of this grant the Durant Library has been able to add over 50 new books to its children's collection. The foundation's grant, along with matching funds from the Friends of the Library, enabled the library to purchase books it could not buy otherwise because of budget restrictions. The Pilcrow Foundation matches on a 2-1 ratio. The books have been on display at the library in the children's area since Thursday, September 28. (Photo submitted)

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