

washingtonpost.com

'Eat': Too Much Bite

Friday, May 5, 2006; WE47

The most persistent question asked at *"When Do We Eat?"* will probably be "When do we leave?"

This abrasive Passover comedy-drama is extremely difficult to sit through, and if its makers weren't all Jewish, it would be considered anti-Semitic. Virtually every Jewish stereotype is re-created, and anyone familiar with "The Protocols of the Elders of Zion" would be quite comfortable watching the movie, which begins with a scene in which a Jewish factory owner tries to set fire to Santa Claus.

Okay, he's a Christmas ornament manufacturer (ho! ho! ho!), and he's testing a new item for the tree. But director Salvador Litvak has a little too much fun with the image for anybody's comfort.

In any event, the movie is basically a chronicle of people snapping at one another. Daddy is Ira Stuckman (Michael Lerner), a prosperous Los Angeles manufacturer, remarried to the evergreen beauty Peggy (evergreen beauty Lesley Ann Warren), and on the feast of Passover, everyone will come home, all ugliness will be deployed, all angers expressed, all deceits unearthed, all unpleasantness brandished. It's a crime to see Warren wasted in this, as it is a few other talents, like the great Jack Klugman as Ira's dad and the Israeli actress Mili Avital as Warren's horny celebrity daughter.

The central conceit is appalling: The drug-taking son Zeke (Ben Feldman) slips ecstasy into dad's heartburn med, and the mean old guy has a hallucinatory breakdown there at the dinner table, not that anyone notices, because everyone in the extended family is too busy taking potshots at everyone else.

"When Do We Eat?" tries to be "funny" in the outrageous way that, say, Philip Roth was in "Portnoy's Complaint," but it hasn't the artistry to make you care; besides, it's hard to care about people who live in a house nicer than yours.

The best thing about "When Do We Eat?" is that the answer to "When do we leave?" is "Pretty soon," as it's only 86 minutes long.

-- **Stephen Hunter**

When Do We Eat? R, 86 minutes Contains sexual innuendo, drug usage, abuse and profanity. At the Avalon.

© 2006 The Washington Post Company

Ads by Google

Advertisement



Advertisement

Win a trip to Britain.

Click here to enter

[Teach Yourself Judaism](#)

How -To Tapes & Cd's, Torah, Prayer Bar-Mitzvah, Hebrew, Psalms & more!

chadishmedia.com

[Xmas Ornaments Ship Free](#)

Wide Selection of Silver Christmas Ornaments. Buy 12 for 10% Discount!

www.WesternSilver.com

[Wedding Ornaments & Favor](#)

Personalized ornaments for holidays and wedding favors.

www.weddingdepot.com