

Blu-ray Review: Deplorable ‘Butter’ Deserves to be Recalled

Submitted by [mattmovieman](#) [1] on January 1, 2013 - 1:02pm

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CHICAGO – Liberals have it easy at the movies. They can go an entire year without having to endure more than a handful of films attacking their ideology with varying degrees of intelligence. For every “An American Carol” or “Atlas Shrugged,” there are countless other pictures portraying rural right-wingers as simple-minded morons.

Yet Jim Field Smith’s “Butter” deserves to be placed in a category all its own. This is such an appallingly inept parody of Sarah Palin that it seems to have been made by Republicans to prove that the liberal media is indeed the spawn of Satan. Palin’s infamous incompetence makes her such an easy target that a satire would seem redundant. Much of the insipid dialogue Tina Fey uttered during her knockout Palin impression on “SNL” came directly from the politician herself, while Julianne Moore’s brilliant portrayal in HBO’s “Game Change” was the result of meticulous research. Moore captured the woman in all of her conflicting shades rather than opt for a caricature.



Blu-ray Rating: **0.5/5.0**

Jennifer Garner’s Laura Pickler, on the other hand, is the very worst kind of caricature. It drains Palin of all textured nuances, leaving nothing but behavioral tics and cartoonish mannerisms. Whereas Moore listened to Palin speeches on her iPod for several months straight, Garner’s research appears to have consisted of watching the 2008 vice presidential debate during its original airing. Coming out on the heels of her embarrassing Disney vehicle, “The Odd Life of Timothy Green,” “Butter” offers further proof that Garner’s talent evaporated sometime after “The Invention of Lying.” Her shtick in “Butter” is so amateurish that it’s downright painful to watch, but to be fair, the debut script by Jason A. Micallef gives her nothing to work with. Apparently Micallef thought he was writing a biting topical social commentary akin to Alexander Payne’s near-masterpiece, “Election,” but his script’s supposedly incendiary jabs are so obvious, they could’ve been devised by the 10-year-old love child of Al Sharpton and Oprah Winfrey. In fact, that’s a fitting description for Destiny (Yara Shahidi), described on the Blu-ray’s patronizing synopsis as “the African-American foster child” of a liberal couple. Though she’s nowhere to be found on the Blu-ray’s star-studded cover, she’s essentially a co-lead with Garner.



Butter was released on Blu-ray and DVD on December 4th, 2012.

Photo credit: Anchor Bay Entertainment

The plot, you ask? I was hoping to spare you of it, but here goes: after winning several championships, Mr. Pickler (Ty Burrell of “Modern Family”) is asked not to compete in his town’s annual butter-carving contest, allowing someone else to have a shot at claiming the trophy. Furious that her family’s prestigious status in town is in danger, Pickler’s domineering opportunist of a wife, Laura, enters the competition herself. Her only formidable rival is—you guessed it, Destiny. That’s right, folks, the film is about a transparent Sarah Palin caricature running in an election against a black kid named Destiny. Micallef’s script consists of one sophomoric put-down after another, while Smith directs with all the subtlety of a sledgehammer. We’re invited to laugh not only at Laura’s unrelenting nastiness and abhorrent racism but her habit of listening to the audio book of “The Secret.” The simplistic moral of the story? Sarah Palin is stupid and people who like her are stupid. “Butter” is almost as vile and hateful in its rampant dishonesty as “2016: Obama’s America.” Almost.

“Butter” is presented in 1080p High Definition (with a 2.35:1 aspect ratio), accompanied by English and Spanish subtitles and is available in a Blu-ray/DVD combo pack. Extras include deleted scenes, a gag reel and no additional laughs, thus keeping the film’s laugh count at zilch. Wait—there was, in fact, one scene that made me half-chuckle. It involves Hugh Jackman, the modern king of bad movies, as Laura’s thick-headed ex-boyfriend bribed into reciting a phony baloney script accusing Destiny of cheating. When he pronounced conscience “con-science,” I chuckled—partly out of incredulity, partly of desperation. In a film this unfunny, you’ve gotta savor whatever you can.

‘Butter’ is released by Anchor Bay Entertainment and stars Jennifer Garner, Yara Shahidi, Ty Burrell, Rob Corddry, Olivia Wilde, Ashley Greene, Alicia Silverstone and Hugh Jackman. It was written by Jason A. Micallef and directed by Jim Field Smith. It was released on December 4th, 2012. It is rated R.

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