

## GOOD TIMES



MOVIE PREVIEW

## DISTRICT 9

Reviewed by  
Ashleigh Davies

Apartheid. Xenophobia. Illegal aliens. Segregation. Conflict. Rights violations. Words that could easily be used to describe our country's most recent past, however what they're referring to is a film that arguably could be one of the biggest in South African cinematic history, District 9.

Produced by Peter Jackson, the man behind everyone's favourite dwarf and elf adventure, the Lord of the Rings, and directed by South African Neill Blomkamp, D9 (as the film has become known) sees a race of actual aliens land in the rainbow nation – and decide to stay. Riffing off the events of last year that saw a series of xenophobic attacks take place back home, the local population has grown fed up of the intergalactic refugees who are segregated from the humans (apartheid?) and treated with disdain.

Filmed in, and around Soweto, and featuring one of the biggest viral campaigns since Cloverfield and the Blair Witch Project, the film is based on Blomkamp's 2005 science fiction short film 'Alive in Joburg'. Wilkus, a Multi-National United (MNU) agent, is a central character in D9 who polices the unwelcome visitors. Played by Sharto Copley, an unknown South African producer and actor, Wilkus is hunted by his own people after being exposed to the aliens' biotechnology. With MNU needing his DNA to help unlock the aliens' superior weapons capabilities, he has no option but to seek help from the very beings that he used to look down on.

While it might never win an Oscar, D9 is a milestone in South African cinema, a summer blockbuster that is pure South African at heart but very Hollywood in it's scope. Dare you enter the district on August 14th? ■

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DAVY BROWN  
DISCOVERS HIS ROOTSBOOK REVIEW  
DAVY BROWN DISCOVERS HIS ROOTS

Reviewed by Shelley Whaits

Davy Brown Discovers His Roots is a simple story with a big message. This children's book is about a boy called Davy Brown who realises that his all-American family isn't all that American after all. While given a class assignment to create their family tree, his classmates' tell the stories of immigrating, and how their families have overcome obstacles to legally stay in the USA (something that many of us Saffa's have had to deal with to stay in the UK!).

Thanks to Velani Mynhardt Withft, one of the authors who was born in South Africa and educated in Pretoria, a South African character is even included. This book will encourage a child to think beyond what they know and to ask questions about their family history, and more importantly, to realise just how much of a multi-cultural society we live in.

One thing that this book got me thinking about was how 'normal' and 'boring' I thought my South African family life is. My parents, cousins and distance relatives were all born in South Africa and we don't have any ritual or cultural habits like the Xhosa or the Ndebeli. Until I moved to London that is, and I realised that we are very lucky to have the lifestyle that we lead in South Africa and that this also makes up who we are.

The message that this book communicates is that we all take our heritage for granted, and we all think that we are just normal – but every person and family has their own special fingerprint. ■

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