

# The castle



Steve Kerrigan, the middle son, an amateur inventor and “ ideas man” The Castle (Sitch 1997) was released in Australia in 1997. It is the first feature from the team behind the highly successful television series Frontline. The story is narrated by the son Dale Kerrigan (Stephen Curry) and tells the story of the working class Kerrigan family, who live in a lower class dwelling in Melbourne adjacent to the main airport and near to high voltage power lines. His father Darryl (Michael Caton) is a tow truck driver and a man who is committed to his family in every respect.

Sal (Anne Tenney) is the mother who is just as devoted to the family and has a love for cooking and craft. The rest of the family includes Steve (Anthony Simcoe), a guy who is always looking for a bargain in the “ Trading Post” and is referred to as the “ idea??™s man”, by his father. Tracey (Sophie Lee) is the daughter and most highly educated of the family, as she is a qualified hairdresser. That just leaves Wayne (Wayne Hope), the brother who is doing time for robbery. The Kerrigans??™ world is running along happily until Darryl receives a visit from a real estate assessor who does a valuation on the house. Soon after, Darryl receives a letter stating that the house has been compulsorily acquired to make way for airport extensions.

Darryl is not at all happy with this as he feels that “ his house is his home, his castle”, and decides to fight the decision. When ??? heavies??™ come knocking at his door he bands together with his fellow neighbours and enlists the help of small time lawyer Dennis Denuto (Tiriell Mora) who is hopelessly out of his league to try to win the case. Along the way the Kerrigans visit their favourite holiday spot “ Bonnie Doon,” which turns out to be a stark landscape with a lake in the middle and high voltage power lines running

across it. The whole family comes along, including Tracy's new husband Con (Eric Bana) which acts to re-emphasize the loving bond within the family. At the Federal Court the underprepared case is lost, unsurprisingly, but along the way Darryl meets up with retired QC Lawrence Hammill (Charles 'Bud' Tingwell) who specialises in constitutional law. He offers to represent the Kerrigans at the High Court, and with his help the Kerrigans win their case and are able to keep their home. In the end the loose ends are tied as Darryl's business expands and Wayne gets parole with the help of Lawrence who becomes a family friend.

The Castle tells a fairly simple story, but tells that story in a very humorous way that works well. It goes away from the somewhat bleak view of families presented in many Australian films before it, to show a family that is very close knit in which I feel is a welcome change. Some have believed that this film is out to somehow make fun of and mock the Kerrigans and therefore mock the values of working class Australia, but I believe just the opposite. I think that this film has cleverly shown that the family, like all families has faults but also that it is a family with pride who will stick up for what they believe in.

I believe that it is commendable that this film has shown an ordinary family, who are battlers in a way that the audience can identify with. Summary: Discusses the Australian film, The Castle. Explores how Australia is depicted in the film. Provides a plot summary. The Castle conveys a variety of messages about Australia. This is primarily done through the experiences of the members of the Kerrigan family, a typical Australian family. For the Kerrigans, every day is a good day because it is nurtured by the seeds of

love, gratitude, and reverence. Although others in the drama look down their noses at this family, they possess the greatest gift of all, a truly happy family life.

Throughout this film many messages are put forward about Australia so that by the end of the film we are left with a feeling that we understand the little world in which this family lives, and we could watch them through an assortment of adventures. I think one of the main messages about Australia conveyed in *The castle* is the fact that Australians are not terribly materialistic and in general are quite simplistic. They appreciate the simple positive things in life no matter how unimportant or visually unappealing they may be to others. Darryl Kerrigan views the world in a unique way.

He looks at the humming power lines above his house and instead of seeing a cancer threat; he sees a symbol of human progress. In a way the entire story line of *The castle* reflects the view of Australians as being simple and straight forward. The slender plot is basically as simple as a children's book.

This uncomplicated plot however leads to a much easier understanding of the messages being conveyed in the film. Australians are shown as being the typical family next door people. The Kerrigans aren't what you would call sophisticated, nor are they well educated; the proudest moment of Darryl's life was when Tracy earned her degree in hair dressing from Sunshine Tech. But all in all they are lovely people, the kind you'd love to have as neighbors, except that being their neighbors would mean that you would live directly under the flight path of approaching planes as well. In the Kerrigans' little street there is a sense of community which I feel also reflects the Australian

life. Especially seeing as the little community of the street was made up of people of all ages and races, which is typical of Australian life.

I consider mate ship as another important message being suggested in The Castle. This film shows the cast as always being there for one another. The first thing that Darryl does when he gets his eviction notice is run to Jacks house to check on him. This sort of caring relationship is shown continually throughout the film and I believe it is put forward as the foundation of the Australian relationships. A prime example of mate ship in the castle is the scenario in which Denis represents Darryl despite his lack competence in the area. Denis is used to dealing with small things such as conveyancing wills and probate not constitutional law. I believe that entering into this case with no idea of what he is doing and only representing Darryl out of mate ship is a perfect example of what Australians are like, Dennis was a little short on specifics, arguing that Darryls case violates the “vibe” of the Australian constitution. Dennis was willing to chuck himself in the deep end of the pool all for the sake of helping out a mate.

I think the most central message about Australia being presented in his movie is to do with Family values. The Kerrigans, are the perfect representation of the traditional Australian family. They are a family which eats dinner together at the same time every night, with Darryl, unfailingly complementing Sal on her cooking.

They love each other and respect each other, and even though Wayne is in jail for armed robbery they are all as proud of him as each other. The film pokes a lot of fun at the Kerrigans and Australians in general. But the typical

Australian family with the pool room, patio & trading post on the kitchen table evoke something deeper in us than a quaint fondness. Although we spend a lot of the film laughing at them and their some what ignorant ways, we find by the end of the film that we have built a kind of bond with them. Despite their to some extent typical Australian foolishness we see that they are a family that is satisfied with family dinners, Hey, Hey Its Saturday, hunting out bargains in the Trading Post, holidays at Bonnie Doon, a pool room and a patio.

Throughout the film we see the closeness of the Kerrigans by examining the camera shots. You find that quite frequently in the film there is a shot of either all the family together or just simply of the family picture. This shows the closeness and love of the family and is an example of Australians close family bonds, which in many ways are no longer as strong. Throughout the film you cant help but laugh at the sincerity with which the actors act out their satire. Not a flinch away from their sincerity, not a side wink to let us know its all a joke. The way in which the messages about Australians are conveyed to the watchers of the castle is usually through the comical things that the characters say, and the way that they say them in all seriousness. This is suited to the depiction of Australians as we as a nation are generally portrayed as laid back people with a simplistic sense of humor.

For example when Darryl welcomes his Greek son in law to the family he does so by taking the piss out his family. This is considered Typical Australian behavior and it is this kind of message that is being conveyed to the Audience of The Castle. The messages are expressed with the use of humor and a little bit of dramatic irony, as well as through the general

relationships between characters. The Castle depicts Australians as warm hearted fools who love their family, take the piss out of others, stand up for their beliefs, bend rules, look on the positive side and like Darryl despite becoming wealthy in the end, Australians manage to retain their humility and love of the simple things in life. Miramax's release strategy for The Castle could charitably be called "curious." The film was an audience favorite at the 1998 Sundance Film Festival. Based on crowd reaction, Miramax shelled out enough money to acquire the rights, then let the print sit on the shelf for nearly one and one-half years, despite glowing reviews from the likes of Roger Ebert (who called it "this year's Full Monty" - referring to last year, of course). Now, with little fanfare and less advertising, it is being dumped into a handful of theaters for a quick showing before being transferred to video tape.

Apparently, with Miramax devoting all of their time, effort, and money into stealing an Oscar for Shakespeare in Love, movies like The Castle become casualties of the box-office war. Fans of quirky Australian fare like Strictly Ballroom and The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert will appreciate The Castle's offbeat sense of humor. Despite being significantly different from Ballroom and Priscilla in content, The Castle has the same irreverent tone. The movie will probably not generate many belly laughs (although there are at least two hilarious sequences), but it will have all but the most die-hard curmudgeons smiling frequently. The feature debut of director Rob Sitch, The Castle represents a pleasant blend of gentle satire and feel-good comedy. Michael Caton plays Darryl Kerrigan, the happiest homeowner in

Australia. His abode at 3 Highview Crescent is his pride and joy, even though its next door to an airport on one side and a high voltage tower on the other.

Darryl lives in the ramshackle little house with his beloved wife, Sal (Anne Tenney), who makes the best meals of any woman on the face of the planet, and his two sons, narrator Dale (Stephen Curry) and “idea man” Steve (Anthony Simcoe). A third son, Wayne (Wayne Hope) is in jail, and a daughter, Tracy (Sophie Lee), has recently entered a life of wedded bliss. For the eternally optimistic Darryl, life couldnt be better. But storm clouds are on the horizon. The airport wants to expand, and, under an agreement with the government, they demand the compulsory acquisition of Darryls home. Instead of accepting their generous offer and moving, he and a few neighbors decide to fight back.

They hire a lawyer, Dennis Denuto (Tiriél Mora), to challenge the constitutionality of the airports case. Unfortunately, Dennis isnt a very good attorney - he cant even get his copier to work - and he botches things up. All is not lost, however. The venerable Lawrence Hammill (Charles Bud Tingwell) takes an interest in Darryls seemingly lost cause, and intends to pursue the matter to the highest court in the land. Although *The Castle* is a comedy, its not entirely without themes and serious ideas. The central conflict is a classic David vs. Goliath (big business infringing on personal liberties) - something that almost everyone (except Fortune 500 CEOs) can relate to.

Also, the concept of a “home” is presented as a deeply personal thing. One individuals shanty might be anothers dream house. Its not just a case of bricks and mortar, but the whole package: memories, feelings, and other



associations (both good and bad). Buildings do not have identities, but homes do. We don't just exist in them, we live there. The actors play every scene and say every line, no matter how outrageous, with perfect sincerity, and that's a key to the film's success. Everyone is a straight man.

Like the characters in *The Brady Bunch Movie*, they don't know that their actions and attitudes are out of synch with a cynical reality. Even the slightest hint of artifice or a sly wink at the audience would have spoiled the effect, so none is evident. The voiceover narration works because it's wonderfully corny. Like in *Waiting for Guffman*, we get a group of characters worth caring about even though we enjoy the way the script pokes fun at them. Yet, while we chuckle at their wholesome, old-fashioned family values and antics, we still find ourselves rooting for them to win their court case, vanquishing big business and striking a blow for the little guy. *The Castle* is not an overly ambitious motion picture, but it has a point to make, and does so in an undeniably entertaining manner. © 1999 James Berardinelli *The Castle* is a 1997 Australian comedy film directed by Rob Sitch. It starred Michael Caton, Anne Tenney, Stephen Curry, Sophie Lee, Eric Bana and Charles Bud Tingwell.

The screenwriting team comprised Sitch, Santo Cilauro, Tom Gleisner and Jane Kennedy of Working Dog Productions. *The Castle* was filmed in 11 days on a budget of approximately A\$19,000.[1] The film gained widespread acclaim in Australia and New Zealand, but was not widely distributed globally. It grossed A\$10,326,428 at the box office in Australia and was Eric Bana's first film.[2] Contents \* 1 Plot \* 2 Cast \* 3 Background \* 4 Production \* 5 Alternative versions \* 6 Box office \* 7 Awards \* 7. 1 Australian Film

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Institute Awards \* 8 See also \* 9 References \* 10 External links| PlotThe blue collar Kerrigan home is filled with love as well as pride in their modest lifestyle, but their happiness is threatened when developers attempt the compulsory acquisition of their house to expand the neighbouring Melbourne Airport. The Kerrigan house is built in a largely undeveloped housing tract, on a toxic landfill, beneath power lines, and directly adjacent to an airport runway. Despite all this, sweet-natured family patriarch Darryl (Michael Caton) believes that he lives in the lap of luxury.

Blissfully unaware of his familys lack of style or sophistication, he busies himself by driving a tow truck, racing greyhounds, and constantly adding tacky renovations to the house. The rest of the Kerrigan clan shares and supports his enthusiasm in every way. One day, a government appraiser arrives to inspect the house.

Though he has no wish to sell, Darryl points out all the faults of the house with pride, believing they will add value. A few weeks later, he receives a letter informing him of the compulsory acquisition of his house for the sum of A\$70, 000. His neighbours all receive similar notices. Believing on common principle that the government cannot evict him unwillingly from his treasured home, Darryl attempts to fight the eviction. Agents from the airport try to bribe and bully the family into giving up, but their actions only stiffen the Kerrigans resolve. Darryl hires an incompetent lawyer acquaintance, Dennis Denuto (Tiriél Mora), but Dennis meagre argument that the eviction goes against the “vibe” of the Constitution does not go well in court. While awaiting the courts final decision, Darryl makes pleasant small talk with a man whom he meets outside the courthouse, Lawrence <https://assignbuster.com/the-castle-3/>

Hammill (Bud Tingwell), who has come to watch his son (a barrister) perform in court. The court rejects the family's appeal and gives them two weeks to vacate.

The purchase price for the home is scarcely enough to cover a small apartment. Dejected in defeat, the family begins to pack. A new breath of hope comes with the surprise arrival of Lawrence, who reveals himself as a retired Queens Counsel.

Lawrence has taken an interest in the Kerrigans case and offers to argue before the High Court of Australia on their behalf, pro bono. Lawrence makes a persuasive case that the Kerrigans have the right to just terms of compensation for acquisition of property under Section 51(xxxi) of the Australian Constitution. He closes by paraphrasing Darryl's own comments that his house is more than just a structure of bricks and mortar, but a home built with love and shared memories. The court rules in favour of the Kerrigans, and their case becomes a landmark precedent on the subject.

An epilogue shows that the Kerrigans continue to prosper happily, and Lawrence becomes a lasting friend of the family. Cast \* Michael Caton as Darryl Kerrigan, the patriarch of the family \* Anne Tenney as Sal Kerrigan, his loving wife \* Stephen Curry as Dale Kerrigan, the youngest son and narrator of the film \* Sophie Lee as Tracey Petropoulous (nee Kerrigan), the family's only daughter, a newlywed hair dresser \* Eric Bana as Con Petropoulous, Tracey's new husband, an accountant and amateur kickboxer \* Anthony Simcoe as Steve Kerrigan, the middle son, an amateur inventor and "ideas man" \* Wayne Hope as Wayne Kerrigan, the black sheep, who is

serving time for armed robbery but loves his family regardless \* Tiriell Mora as Dennis Denuto, a bumbling small-time lawyer who previously failed to defend Wayne from his charge \* Costas Kiliadis as Farouk, the Kerrigans neighbour \* Charles Bud Tingwell as Lawrence Hammill, a retired lawyer who comes to the Kerrigans aid \* John Flaus as Sgt. Kennedy, a local police officer \* Tony Martin as Adam Hammill, Lawrences son. (Cameo) \* Ian Ross appears as himself, a Channel Nine newsreader \* Larry Emdur appears as himself, the host of The Price is Right \* Brian Dawe as a Lawyer for Air

The humour in The Castle plays on the self image of Australians, most notably the concepts of working class Australians and their place in the modern Australia.[3] The film title is named for the English saying, repeatedly used in the film, " a mans home is his castle".

The film also refers to the land rights movement of the Australian Aborigines, with Darryl Kerrigan drawing an explicit parallel between his struggle and theirs. It also draws on one of the few rights protected in the Australian Constitution for subject matter, the right to just terms compensation for acquisition of property under s51(xxxi). Also interspersed in the film are many references to famous Australian Constitutional Law Cases, such as Mabo and the Tasmanian Dams Case. The film also deals with section 109 of the Constitution which provides that in the case of an inconsistency between Federal and State law, the Federal law shall prevail to the extent of the inconsistency. ProductionThe Castle was filmed mostly in Melbourne, Australia. The external shots of the Kerrigan household were shot at 3 Dagonet St, Strathmore, and airport footage was shot at Essendon Airport

and Melbourne Airport. Location shots of Brunswick feature in the film, including Brunswick Town Hall.

Melbourne's 200 Queen Street and the Supreme Court of Victoria are featured along with the High Court of Australia in Canberra. Some of the film is set in Bonnie Doon, and a very small portion of it was shot there. The name Kerrigan was chosen for the family so that tow trucks for the film could be borrowed from an existing Melbourne tow truck company with that name.

[4] In January 2011, 3491 Maintongoon Road, Bonnie Doon was listed for sale.

The property appeared in the film as the Kerrigan family holiday house.[5]

The property's real estate agent reported that many people called and after requesting the asking price, replied with a quote from the movie - "tell him he's dreaming".[6] Alternative versions

In the US version, there were several minor changes to dialogue. "Rissolle" was changed to "meatloaf", "two-stroke" was changed to "diesel", references to the Australian TV show Hey Hey Its Saturday were changed to Funniest Home Videos, and the brand names of the various cars in the driveway were changed from Australian (Camira) to American ones (Corolla).[7] The Australian TV-Version for "before 8.

30pm screening" has scenes of explicit language either completely cut, where possible, masked by aircraft noises or redubbed when lip movements are not visible. When broadcast after 8: 30pm, all explicit language is intact.

Box office The Castle grossed A\$10, 326, 428 at the box office in Australia,[8] making back over 500% of its A\$19, 000 budget. Summary: Discusses the

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They appreciate the simple positive things in life no matter how unimportant or visually unappealing they may be to others. Darryl Kerrigan views the world in a unique way. He looks at the humming power lines above his house and instead of seeing a cancer threat; he sees a symbol of human progress. In a way the entire story line of the castle reflects the view of Australians as being simple and straight forward. The slender plot is basically as simple as a children's book. This uncomplicated plot however leads to a much easier understanding of the messages being conveyed in the film. Australians are shown as being the typical family next door people.

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degree in hair dressing from Sunshine Tech. But all in all they are lovely people, the kind you'd love to have as neighbors, except that being their neighbors would mean that you would live directly under the flight path of approaching planes as well. In the Kerrigans little street there is a sense of community which I feel also reflects the Australian life. Especially seeing as the little community of the street was made up of people of all ages and races, which is typical of Australian life. I consider mate ship as another important message being suggested in The Castle. This film shows the cast as always being there for one another. The first thing that Darryl does when he gets his eviction notice is run to Jacks house to check on him.

This sort of caring relationship is shown continually throughout the film and I believe it is put forward as the foundation of the Australian relationships. A prime example of mate ship in the castle is the scenario in which Denis represents Darryl despite his lack competence in the area. Denis is used to dealing with small things such as conveyancing wills and probate not constitutional law. I believe that entering into this case with no idea of what he is doing and only representing Darryl out of mate ship is a perfect example of what Australians are like, Dennis was a little short on specifics, arguing that Darryls case violates the "vibe" of the Australian constitution. Dennis was willing to chuck himself in the deep end of the pool all for the sake of helping out a mate.

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complementing Sal on her cooking. They love each other and respect each other, and even though Wayne is in jail for armed robbery they are all as proud of him as each other. The film pokes a lot of fun at the Kerrigans and Australians in general. But the typical Australian family with the pool room, patio & trading post on the kitchen table evoke something deeper in us than a quaint fondness. Although we spend a lot of the film laughing at them and their some what ignorant ways, we find by the end of the film that we have built a kind of bond with them. Despite their to some extent typical Australian foolishness we see that they are a family that is satisfied with family dinners, Hey, Hey Its Saturday, hunting out bargains in the Trading Post, holidays at Bonnie Doon, a pool room and a patio.

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Australian behavior and it is this kind of message that is being conveyed to the Audience of The Castle. The messages are expressed with the use of humor and a little bit of dramatic irony, as well as through the general relationships between characters.

The Castle depicts Australians as warm hearted fools who love their family, take the piss out of others, standup for their beliefs, bend rules, look on the positive side and like Darryl despite becoming wealthy in the end, Australians manage to retain their humility and love of the simple things in life. Term PaperRob Sitch??™s film The Castle is an Australian comedy, which delves into the lives of a stereotypical Australian family, the Kerrigans. Despite its highly credible cast line-up, and distinguished comedy writing team (including The Panel??™s Santo Cilauro), it is a low budget, low quality, box-office flop. The audience is introduced to the classic Aussie family, as narrated by the youngest of the Kerrigans, Dale.

The setting is a lower class Melbourne suburb, adjacent to an airport. The head of the Kerrigan household, Darryl Kerrigan (Michael Caton), is a simple man, but a man of incredible pride. He is a typical Aussie bloke who is adored by his family yet disregarded by society. Nonetheless, seemingly oblivious to reality, Darryl lives and rules in his own home, which he calls his castle. Sal Kerrigan (Anne Tenney) is the classic Australian housewife, who is wholly devoted to her family, and especially her husband. Her cooking lacks sophistication of any form, yet is praised beyond any professional chef??™s wildest dreams. The Kerrigan children mirror all the somewhat deficient, aspirate characteristics of their parents. The eldest, Wayne, is in jail, but is still accepted by his family.

Steve is an inventive mechanic who truly makes his father proud. Tracey (Sophie Lee) is the only girl in the family, and as is made quite obvious, is the favourite. She is considered to be the most successful in the family, since she is the only one who has completed any form of tertiary education.

Tracey is a certified hairdresser.

This made her dad ??? mighty proud???. She was also the first to get married. Her husband, Con Petropoulos (Full Frontal??™s Eric Bana), is a Greek, kickboxing accountant. As the story unravels, the Kerrigans are faced with a major dilemma, in the form of a compulsory acquisition of their home. The land on which their house is built, is needed by the corporate giant Airlink to build the largest freight handling facility in Australia.

And so the Kerrigans embark on an odyssey to save their ??? castle??? from acquisition and consequent demolition. This film was far from technically amazing. No special effects were notably employed, as wowing audiences with technical brilliance was not the intent of this movie. Technical indifference did result in the film appearing to have been recorded in the eighties. The need for a crisp, effective image was ignored, and the result was a second class film.

Sound was fairly standard too. Technicalities aside, there were many other opportunities for The Castle to redeem itself. However, very few of these were employed. The only commendable aspect of the film was the cast??™s superior performances. Despite all ??? cop-outs??? on Australians, the character portrayals was sardonically entertaining. Unfortunately, the simplistic dialogue was extremely disappointing, and the scripted plot was

highly predictable and unoriginal. It is quite abhorrent to think that this is the way that the Australian film industry presents itself to the rest of the world.

It is movies like The Castle that give the rest of the world the impression that Australians are pathetic, uneducated, classless yobbos. I, for one, would like to be rid of the categorisation. This film does not do any justice for the vast majority of city-dwelling Australians who do not even come close in resembling this typecast. The Castle attempts to comically exploit every element of the stereotypical Australian identity, however flounders in its excessiveness. Australians would generally accept this film in good humour, and most would find it quite entertaining. It certainly lacks any form of intellectual stimulation, though a few hearty laughs may be evoked. But for those who may take this film seriously, and perceive Australians to be just as the characters in the film are, then I am truly ashamed to label myself an Australian.