



Emma Roberts is on the case as the resourceful girl detective.

Nancy Drew

Emma Roberts, Tate Donovan, Josh Flitter | PG | ★★☆☆

MYSTERY

Journalistic ethics require this disclosure: I read exactly one Nancy Drew mystery in fourth grade and didn't get the appeal of the beloved series. All that talk of Ned, roadsters and hunting for clues in abandoned mansions paled next to the thrill-filled young adult novels I was sneaking off my adolescent sister's bookshelf, like *Johnny Tremain* and *Island of the Blue Dolphins*. Nancy in her kneesocks, kilts and loafers seemed boringly bland. Sorry to say, but this updated incarnation of the teenage-girl detective doesn't change my original opinion. Though the film transplants Nancy (Roberts) to L.A.'s Hollywood High, she's still a little too smugly chipper about her own deductive abilities. That said, the film will tickle avid fans and entertain the tweeners at whom it's aimed. Roberts seems appropriately spunky but as yet lacks her famous aunt Julia's radiant smile and infectious giggle.

NANCY DREW'S JOSH FLITTER DETECTIVE, JUNIOR GRADE

"I'm an old soul," says Flitter, a seventh-grader from New Jersey.

- He's Emma Roberts' wisecracking pal in *Nancy Drew* and Robin Williams' sidekick in *License to Wed*. But Flitter, 12, has bigger screen ambitions than playing second banana.

WHAT'S WITH THE SUIT? I'm always cast in movies as a little man—everyone says I'm a man in a kid's body.

IN NANCY DREW YOU NEARLY KISS EMMA ROBERTS ONSCREEN. It was in the script that we don't kiss. If I had tried, it would have been a good outtake, but also a good slap in the face! Emma and I, we're such a great team.

WHAT'S YOUR ULTIMATE ROLE? I'd like to play Chris Farley in a movie about his life. So I can be funny and dramatic at the same time. —NATASHA STOYNOFF

Fido

Carrie-Anne Moss, Billy Connolly | R | ★★☆☆

COMEDY

Zombies are so darn flexible. Not the Madonna, four-hours-of-yoga-a-day kind of flexible, but rather in that they can represent whatever a filmmaker wants them to. There are scary, chomp-happy zombies (think *28 Days Later*), goofy zombies (*Shaun of the Dead*) and now, in *Fido*, caring, helpful, servile zombies.

A spoof of 1950s sci-fi and horror films, *Fido* is set in an idyllic, Leave It to Beaverish suburb, where the living dead serve as domestic servants. Housewife Helen Robinson (Moss), desperate to keep up with the neighbors, hires zombie Fido (Connolly) as the family's butler. Soon Fido is giving Helen the attention and affection she craves but isn't receiving from her uptight husband (Dylan Baker). The film has about an hour's worth of plot and good jokes—too bad it runs 91 minutes. Still, the performances are tart, and the faux '50s look—so shiny you could eat off the linoleum—is a visual treat.



Desperate housewife Moss (left) tangoes with a zombie (Connolly).