

please don't eat the daisies

Please Don't Eat the Daisies: An In-Depth Exploration of the Classic Comedy and Its Cultural Significance

Introduction

Please don't eat the daisies is a phrase that has captured the imagination of many, often evoking images of innocence, mischief, and the unpredictability of family life. While the phrase can be humorous or literal depending on context, it also references a beloved 1960s comedy film and a popular Broadway play. This article delves into the origins, themes, cultural impact, and legacy of Please Don't Eat the Daisies, providing a comprehensive overview for enthusiasts and newcomers alike.

Origins of "Please Don't Eat the Daisies"

The Play by Jean Kerr

The phrase gained widespread popularity from the stage play Please Don't Eat the Daisies, written by Jean Kerr in 1957. The play is a semi-autobiographical comedy based on Kerr's own experiences as a writer and mother. It humorously depicts the chaos of family life, showcasing the humorous side of everyday struggles.

The Film Adaptation

In 1960, the play was adapted into a film directed by Charles Walters, starring Doris Day and David Niven. The movie retained the comedic tone of the play and brought the phrase into mainstream consciousness. The film's success helped cement the phrase as a cultural reference point.

The Plot and Themes of Please Don't Eat the Daisies

Plot Summary

The story revolves around a suburban family navigating the challenges of parenting, career ambitions, and maintaining a sense of humor amid chaos. The main characters include:

- Martha: A writer and the mother trying to balance her career with family life.
- Jim: Martha's husband, a newspaper editor.
- Children: Their lively children often cause comedic disruptions.
- Pets: The family's pets add to the humorous mishaps.

Throughout the story, the family faces humorous misadventures, from mischievous children to household disasters, emphasizing the joys and frustrations of family life.

Central Themes

- Family Life and Parenthood: The play and film celebrate the messiness and unpredictability of raising children.
- Humor in Everyday Chaos: Finding comedy in the chaos of daily routines is a core theme.
- Work-Life Balance: Martha's struggles as a working mother highlight societal expectations.
- Marriage and Partnership: The supportive yet humorous dynamics between Martha and Jim.

Cultural Significance and Impact

Representation of 1950s and 1960s American Family Life

Please Don't Eat the Daisies resonated with audiences during the post-war era, reflecting the suburban ideal while humorously acknowledging its imperfections. It provided a relatable portrayal of the modern American family with a humorous lens.

Influence on Comedy and Theatre

The success of the play and film influenced subsequent comedic works centered on family life. Its witty dialogue and relatable characters set a standard for domestic comedies.

Iconic Quotations and Phrases

The phrase "please don't eat the daisies" became a humorous metaphor for dealing with chaos or unwanted surprises, often used in contexts beyond the original work.

Key Characters and Their Significance

Martha

A strong, witty woman balancing her career and family. Her character embodies the modern woman's struggles and resilience.

Jim

The humorous and supportive husband whose antics often complement Martha's efforts.

The Children

Representing the unpredictable nature of childhood, they add humor and chaos to the narrative.

The Pets

Adding to the comedic mishaps, the family's pets symbolize the unpredictable elements in family life.

The Legacy of Please Don't Eat the Daisies

Continued Relevance

Despite being rooted in the 1950s and 1960s, the themes of Please Don't Eat the Daisies remain relevant today, especially in discussions about family dynamics, work-life balance, and humor as a coping mechanism.

Adaptations and References

Over the decades, the phrase and concept have been referenced in various media, including:

- TV sitcoms
- Comedy sketches
- Literature

Modern Parallels

Contemporary works that explore family chaos and humor often draw inspiration from the original Please Don't Eat the Daisies. Examples include shows like Modern Family and The Middle.

Why "Please Don't Eat the Daisies" Continues to Resonate

Universal Themes

The humor derived from everyday chaos makes the story timeless. Everyone can relate to moments of family disorder, making the phrase universally applicable.

The Power of Humor

Using humor to navigate life's messes allows audiences to find comfort and joy in imperfections, a message that remains powerful regardless of era.

Nostalgia and Cultural Reflection

The phrase invokes a nostalgic look at mid-20th-century American life, providing cultural insights and a sense of shared history.

Conclusion

Please Don't Eat the Daisies is more than just a humorous phrase; it embodies the chaos, love, and resilience inherent in family life. From its origins in Jean Kerr's witty play to its film adaptation and ongoing cultural references, the phrase continues to evoke laughter and reflection. Whether used literally or figuratively, "please don't eat the daisies" reminds us to find humor amidst the mess and to cherish the unpredictable beauty of everyday life.

Additional Resources

Books and Articles

- Please Don't Eat the Daisies by Jean Kerr - The original play
- Biographies of Jean Kerr and Doris Day
- Critical analyses of American domestic comedy

Films and TV Shows

- The 1960 film Please Don't Eat the Daisies
- Modern sitcoms inspired by family chaos

Online Communities

- Forums discussing classic American comedy
- Social media hashtags related to family humor (FamilyChaos, DomesticComedy)

SEO Keywords and Phrases

- Please don't eat the daisies meaning
- Please don't eat the daisies play
- Please don't eat the daisies film
- Family comedy classics
- 1960s American comedy
- Domestic humor movies
- Jean Kerr plays
- Doris Day movies
- Humor in family life
- Suburban family stories

By understanding the origins, themes, and cultural impact of Please Don't Eat the Daisies, readers can appreciate its enduring legacy as a humorous reflection of family life. Its timeless appeal continues to resonate, reminding us all to laugh amid life's chaos.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the movie 'Please Don't Eat the Daisies' about?

'Please Don't Eat the Daisies' is a 1960 comedy film about a family adjusting to life in the suburbs while dealing with humorous domestic challenges and the chaos caused by their children and pets.

Who are the main stars of 'Please Don't Eat the Daisies'?

The film stars Doris Day, David Niven, and Janis Paige, who bring to life the humorous and relatable characters in the story.

Is 'Please Don't Eat the Daisies' based on a book or play?

Yes, the film is based on a semi-autobiographical novel by Jean Kerr, which was also adapted into a Broadway play prior to the movie.

What are some common themes in 'Please Don't Eat the Daisies'?

The film explores themes of family life, suburban living, parenting challenges, and maintaining humor amidst chaos.

How has 'Please Don't Eat the Daisies' remained relevant today?

Its humorous portrayal of family dynamics and suburban life continues to resonate with audiences, highlighting timeless issues of parenting and household chaos.

Are there any remakes or adaptations of 'Please Don't Eat the Daisies'?

While there haven't been direct remakes, the story has inspired various adaptations, including stage productions and references in modern media about family life.

What is the significance of the title 'Please Don't Eat the Daisies'?

The title reflects the humorous and chaotic tone of the story, symbolizing the playful chaos of family life and the idea of not taking things too seriously.

Where can I watch 'Please Don't Eat the Daisies' today?

The film is available on various streaming platforms, DVD collections, and might occasionally air on classic movie channels. Check services like Amazon Prime, Hulu, or TCM for availability.

Additional Resources

Please Don't Eat the Daisies is a delightful theatrical and cinematic gem that has captivated audiences for decades with its charming humor, witty dialogue, and endearing characters. Originally a novel by Doris Day and R. C. Sherriff, the story has been adapted into a play and a beloved film, with the latter starring Doris Day herself. The title, quirky and memorable, hints at the playful nature of the narrative, which revolves around a restless family navigating the chaos of suburban life, artistic pursuits, and personal aspirations. This review explores the various facets of Please Don't Eat the Daisies, from its plot and characters to its themes and cultural impact, offering a comprehensive look into why it remains a timeless classic.

Plot Overview

Please Don't Eat the Daisies centers on the lively, somewhat chaotic household of the Hager family, led by the spirited and resourceful editor/author, M. (played by Doris Day), and her husband, Larry Hager, a playwright. The story captures their struggles to balance their careers, their children's antics, and their desire for a peaceful family life. The family's home is a whirlwind of comedic mishaps, artistic aspirations, and heartfelt moments, set against the backdrop of mid-20th-century suburban America.

The plot is driven by the Hagers' attempts to keep their household afloat amid the unpredictable antics of their children and the various challenges faced by their careers. The narrative weaves humor with genuine insights into family dynamics, showcasing how love, patience, and a sense of humor can overcome even the most chaotic situations. A key element is the humorous tension between the desire for order and the reality of family life, which is both relatable and amusing.

Characters and Performances

Main Characters

- M. (Doris Day): The central figure, M. is a lively, witty woman juggling her career as an

editor and her family responsibilities. Her comedic timing and relatable personality make her the heart of the story.

- Larry Hager: Her husband, a playwright with a creative spirit, often finds himself caught between his ambitions and the everyday chaos of family life.

- The Children: Their kids, each with distinct personalities, add humor and heart to the story, representing the unpredictable nature of raising children.