

Eddie Murphy

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In less than a ten years, Eddie Murphy has managed to change his image in a most remarkable way. He went from being a foul mouthed R-rated funny man, to being able to play in kid's movies such as Daddy Day Care or the voice of the Donkey in Shrek. What an astonishing transformation this is when you stop to think about it. He is a living paradox. In a sense, he has now become a mature man, by route of his playfulness and child-like side.

The Eddie Murphy who became famous in the 80's is vastly different than the Eddie Murphy of today. Many of today's kids probably do not even realize he starred in such swear-filled projects such as Raw or even had his own song: My Girl Likes to Party All the Time. Kids today think of him as kid's movie actor. He has found his niche and I think it is amazing. How many other actors have made such a radical identity shift? Not many. John Travolta? Tom Hanks? Certainly both of them have made huge identity shifts, but not in exactly the same way as Eddie Murphy. It seems Eddie Murphy is having a new life and the part of being a foul mouthed funny man had been part of his past life. Did Eddie Murphy plan to star in kids movies? Or did this type cast been thrown upon him? I do know the answer, but one thing is for sure, he can never go back to playing an outrageously funny manipulative jerk. Well at least he cannot go back to it without suffering the consequences, the horrible reviews, and the loss of his under 10 fan base. But who knows for sure? Will he play Axel Foley again? Will there be yet Another 48 Hours? I do not believe he would ever want his career to back track in that way, but it is possible. He has taken some risks over the years, and is capable of taking more. I for one applaud Eddie Murphy and his switch to being the lead in fun G-rated movies. However, the only downside is that part of me misses the old Eddie. Some of his old movies are actually hard to find. I tried three video stores looking for The Golden Child and have not been able to rent it. And I am sure I am not the only one who misses his often crass but funny antics. Remember Mr. Robinson's neighborhood, from Saturday Night Live? Though inappropriate for very young children, those were classic comedy sketches. There is a middle ground however: A place between Adult material and pure Kids films, and Eddie has done this type of film before. Coming to America might be the best example. This great movie had some mature scenes, yet also a lot of kid-friendly silliness. I for one would love to see Eddie Murphy and Arsenio Hall team up once again. So, in order to keep his career thriving he is not limited to just one genre. He doesn't have to be known as just a donkey in a cartoon. He can always find the middle ground.