



FILM: **CAFÉ SOCIETY**

FDG RATING: 2.7 ☹️☹️☹️⬜⬜

Film Discussion Group (FDG) Scale is 1-5 (5 is best)

Woody Allen: *Director*
Jesse Eisenberg: *Actor: Bobby Dorfman*
Kristen Stewart: *Actress: Vonnie*
Steve Carell: *Actor: Uncle Phil*

DATE: August 21, 2016

DISCUSSION SUMMARY: **CAFÉ SOCIETY**

Café Society is Woody Allen's nostalgic ode to 1930s glamorous Hollywood and 1930s high-society New York. A time that, at least in this film, is completely amoral with adultery synonymous with the film industry just as murder and mafia are with New York. It's a time when people often get away with their crimes. The randomness of good and evil. Into this mix, we meet a young man from the Bronx, Bobby Dorfman, who moves to Hollywood, where his uncle, a powerful agent to the industry's movie stars, has been requested by the family to take the young man under his wing. After an initial cold shoulder, Uncle Phil, reluctantly plunges Jesse to his circle of power lunches and cocktail and pool parties. Bobby, unwittingly falls in love with his uncle's beautiful young secretary, not realizing she is having an affair with his uncle. Kristen Stewart plays the young seductress perfectly just as Steve Carell has a strong performance in the role of Uncle Phil. Some of our reviewers, felt that Jesse Eisenberg was completely miscast as a young Jewish boy from the Bronx, and his voice, dialogue, and intonations which were very Woody Allenish, just didn't ring true coming from Jesse.

Nothing good can come of the menage a trois romantic situation. Jesse returns to New York where he is swept up in the high-society nightclub life under the tutorship of his gangster brother.

The cinematography, costumes, sets, and total ambiance is captivating. But that's not enough to save a weak story. Drawing attention to the weak story is Allen's narration, which sounded sluggish as well. A few funny lines remind us of the gems that generously peppered his earlier films. Bobby's bickering parents, were perfectly cast and supply a few Yiddish-inflected laughs, ("I accept death, but under protest," Dad says. "Protest to who?" Mom responds.)

For one ardent Allen fan, this was his worst film. Our other reviewers allowed the beautiful sets and costumes to soften their disappointment and some enjoyed the film despite its shortcomings. Not quite a bottom of the barrel rating, 2.7 is all Café Society could muster. (1-5 scale, 5 is the best.)



See you at the movies!

Adriane Dedic, adedic@pacbell.net

[Film Discussion Group](#) (FDG) organizer