



FILM: **LOBSTER**

FDG RATING: 1.9



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

Yorgos Lanthimo: *Director (Greek filmmaker)*

Colin Farrell: *Actor: David*

Rachel Weisz: *Actress: short sighted female*

DATE: June 19, 2016

DISCUSSION SUMMARY: **LOBSTER**

It was like going to a 5 star restaurant that boasted a unique gourmet experience by a new chef and then sitting down to an unpleasant meal. The trailer was so intriguing, such an original, quirky storyline, and the media critics loved it ("a brilliantly funny horror movie about dating, thoroughly executed..."). But for all except 3 of our film reviewers, the film was very distasteful. And even our less negative reviewers only managed a rating of 3.5. The rest of us gave the film awfully low marks.

On the positive side, the film was thought provoking as it forced us to examine how we culturally manage relationships and was uncomfortably real in its exaggerated portrayal of our dating rituals: seeking a mate with many of the same interests, feeling pressured to be in a relationship, joining communities specifically to "meet up" with an ideal match, progressing through the dating stages. We've all probably tried to convert our single friends by fixing them up - not quite as extreme as in the film where guests at the "relationship" hotel can venture into the woods to hunt and shoot (with a tranquilizer dart) any "loner" they find.

We had mixed opinions about Colin Farrell's performance as the protagonist, David, a slightly shlumpy divorced architect who, in this somewhat surreal society, must find a new mate within 45 days or he will be transformed into an animal of his choosing. David's animal of choice is a lobster. He mentions a few reasons but omits the fact that lobsters mate for life which implies that even if it wasn't the unavoidable rule, he still prefers coupledness.

Much of the action takes place in the hotel where all the guests are trying to find similarities that connect them with their potential mate and they go to great lengths to pretend or even physically change to mimic trivial similarities. Some of us admitted we have on occasion presented a false front to others and have sought out what we have in common with another person to ignite or solidify a relationship.

There's a lot of dark humor mingled in the strangeness of this familiar and at the same time unfamiliar world. And some very powerful messages that would be better received without the brutally distasteful scenes. So brutal that several reviewers almost walked out of the theater.

Both the "couple" society and the "loner" society had unreasonably strict rules and the leader of each society wielded their absolute power over their constituents who like sheep, blindly obeyed. The characters were emotionless, spoke in cold mono-tone voices, engaged in shallow conversations and any relationships seemed pretty gloomy. The film was slow and weird.

Except for a few nods at the cleverness, ambitious original script, and thought provoking premise, we agreed that the distasteful brutality and weirdness distanced the viewer and got in the way of the messages. Some of us "detested" the film, despite good acting it was way too dark and violent, even "disgusting".

We gave the film a very unappealing score of 1.9 on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the best. (One resident reviewer wanted to give it a minus score but settled on 0.)



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See you at the movies!

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