



FILM: **PARASITE**

FDG RATING: 3.8 ☺☺☺☺○

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

Bong Joon Ho: *director/writer*
Choi Woo-shik: *actor, Kim Ki-woo, son*
Park So-dam: *actress, Kim Ki-jeong, daughter*
Cho Yeo-jeong: *actress, Yeon-gyo, mother of the Park family*

DATE: November 17, 2019

DISCUSSION SUMMARY: **PARASITE**

Parasite definition: one organism benefits at the expense of another organism usually of different species (called host), sometimes without killing the host organism.

Golden Globe winner for Best Foreign Language Film, Bong Joon Ho's *Parasite*, focuses on the relationship of two South Korean families: the Parks are extremely wealthy and the Kim family is living on the edge of poverty. As the members of the Kim family, one by one, ingratiate him/her self into the privileged needs/desires of the Parks, beginning with Kim Ki-woo (who has changed his name to Kevin) tutoring the pretty young teen age girl, we see the parasitic relationship taking shape.

Kevin notices the Parks have a young son who likes to draw so he mentions he knows of a very good art teacher, and introduces his sister to the Parks as the very qualified art instructor, Jessica. She slyly gets the chauffeur dismissed so that her father can take his place. And lastly, their mother replaces the housekeeper/cook. One published review described the film as "a comedy of manners that bounces a group of lovable con artists off a very wealthy family of awkward eccentrics."

It's an interesting concept as we see both family organisms benefiting, as they "feed" off the other. But can the poor really just step into the world of the rich? Everything changes as the balance goes off kilter. Some very unexpected things happen that discussion participants described as nightmarish, weird, and extremely disturbing. Some of us think the film would have been better had it not descended into the gruesome realm and felt the excessive violence was gratuitous. But the definition, at the beginning of this summary, offers an explanation if in this film "sometimes" is the exception.

Extremely original and creative, with exceptional cinematic insight into the lives of each family such as the basement dwelling of the Kims as they open their street level window during neighborhood fumigation to kill the bugs in their living quarters or when we see the family crammed in their basement assembling piles of pizza boxes as a way to make some money. The closeness of the Kim family reminded us of the Japanese film *Shoplifters*.

The gruesome scenes didn't eat away our relatively high scores for this film which resulted in 3.8 on our scale of 1 to 5. (5 is the best)



See you at the movies!

Adriane Dedic, adedic@pacbell.net

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