

The MarNae Log Reviewing the Reviewer

Rear Window, a film by Alfred Hitchcock was the eye-opener of what we all do when we're in the comfort of our own homes. We peeked through our windows and notice our neighbors. We wonder what they did that day or what they were currently doing at that moment. We know it's wrong but asserting yourself into others' lives really is just the joy of being human. In this film, the main character L.B. Jeffries (James Stewart) Jeff is trapped in a wheelchair in his apartment because of his broken leg. As the days and nights pass he shamelessly spies on his neighbors out of boredom. Except I'm not here to give you a synopsis of the film. I'm here to judge the judgers. Explore their thinking and their techniques. Today we'll be exploring the 2000 review from Roger Ebert.

The reviewer starts off by calling Jeff the hero of the film. This I can attest to since he did solve a murder. Except he had help. Stella (Thelma Ritter), his nurse, and Lisa (Grace Kelly) his love interest both played crucial roles in figuring out what happened and who had done it. At the end of his opening paragraph, the author says "Here's a film about a man who does on the screen what we do in the audience—look through a lens at the private lives of strangers." This was an interesting way to describe how people view movies. When we go to the movies are we truly looking through the private lives of strangers? The people who we watch are just people playing a character. It's just a role that's given to them to play. Not really who they are behind the scenes. I think it's weird to call the viewers voyeurs when it's not in the same context.

Further on he describes the relationship between Jeff, Lisa, and Stella. Went on about

how their relationship and what it consists of. Lisa is a bit more important though. The author labeled her as his fiancée but I believe that they were just partners. Maybe they were just together but without the title since it was hard for Jeff to commit and be 100% with Lisa. So calling her his fiancée is invalid for the point of the timeline we're in now. I guess it only becomes valid at the end of the film when everyone has a happily ever after. Continuing we meet other characters as the film continues. I like how this article goes into detail about the women and men in the film. We never really get to "meet" them just see them how Jeff does. Not only does the author introduce the other characters he describes how they received the names they did, Miss Lonelyhearts, Miss Torso, Thorvald, the composer, and the couple with the dog. Knowing who these characters are thickened the plot because Thorvald is our person of interest. As the author states, he had a miserable life because of his wife who we see a number of times before she quickly disappears. I appreciate the writer for including the clues of how Jeff suspects a murder has taken place, i.e. the saw, suitcase, and the hole in the garden. Here's where things get interesting.

I think the article gets a little off-topic here. Comparison to other works of art is nice and all but I'm not here to learn about Russian directors or any of Hitchcock's other films. I wanna know about Rear Window and how I should watch the film. I know he didn't want to give too much information away about the film but it would've been nice to leave out the extra details. He also goes into detail about the actors who play the roles. He writes a lot about who Jeff is and what kind of person he is. Again it's nice to know but unimportant. I want to know about the film. I can learn about Jeff from watching the movie, not this article. I do like how he throws a little bone at the readers about his standoff with the murderer.

Overall I think this article gave a good depiction of what to expect from the movie. The

Robert Ebert review could've done better by just focusing more on the plot and not the actors. Of course, I'd want to know about who and what I'm watching but I'm more so interested in learning about the movie. I want to know more about the suspect. I think that answering the question of who, what, when, where, and why could've been answered without giving away full details of the movie. What? A story unfolds about a photographer who... Who? The characters were perfectly executed here so therefore nothing much to change. Where? In the beginning, let me know that we're in New York. When? Year whatever...Why? For pleasure, enjoyment, out of boredom. Give me more about what I'm watching and less about the real-life actors.