

Short Review: “Soylent Green” (1973) by Dr. John L. Flynn



Soylent Green (1973). MGM, USA, color, 97 min. Director: Richard Fleischer. Written by: Harry Harrison (novel) and Stanley R. Greenberg. Produced by: Walter Selzer and Russell Thacher. Cast: Charlton Heston, Leigh Taylor-Young, Chuck Connors, Joseph Cotton, and Edward G. Robinson.

Okay, Soylent Green is people. It's the early twenty-first century, and the U.S. population depends upon government handouts to survive, serving Soylent Green like Happy Meals. New York does not look like the “city that never sleeps” but rather the “city that never eats.” The greenhouse effect has wiped out many sources of energy. Robinson pedals a bicycle to store up electricity for his pad. His roommate, a police detective (Heston) investigates the murder of a Soylent official. The investigation leads him to the source of Soylent Green, and we all know that it's not organic mung beans. The leggy Leigh Taylor-Young, as the kept woman of the Soylent official, reminds us of Xavier Hollander, the happy hooker. Overpopulation was the theme of Harrison's doom-and-gloom book Make Room, Make Room, but Heston and the producers have much more fun poking fun at the make-up of Ronald McDonald's Happy Meals.

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