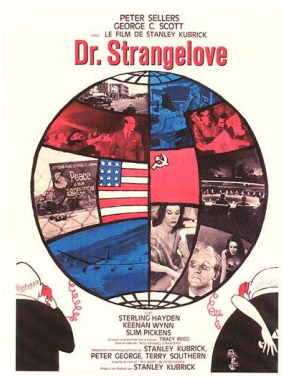


Short Review: “Dr. Strangelove” (1964) by Dr. John L. Flynn



Dr. Strangelove, or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb (1964). Hawk Films, b/w, 94 min. Director and Producer: Stanley Kubrick. Screenwriters: Kubrick, Terry Southern and Peter George. Cast: Peter Sellers, George C. Scott, Sterling Hayden, Keenan Wynn, Slim Pickens, and Peter Bull.

The titular ex-Nazi, mad scientist (Sellers, in one of three roles) suggests building a new, master race with ten women assigned to every man (We can dig it!) in fall-out shelters deep below the earth's surface when an equally mad general (Hayden as General Jack D. Ripper) launches a pre-emptive nuclear strike against the Soviet Union (to prevent the Ruskies from fluoridating our water). President Muffley (Sellers again) and General “Buck” Turgidson (Scott auditioning for “Patton”) debate their limited options, but ultimately decide to destroy the world in order to save it. The film ends, not with a climatic custard-pie fight (as was originally filmed), but with the detonation of hundreds of atomic bombs choreographed to Vera Lynn’s “We’ll Meet Again.” Conceived as a straight documentary about the last days, based on Peter George's thriller Red Alert, Kubrick later relented and masterfully relied on black comedy to address our fear and anxieties about the bomb and nuclear warfare. This is satire at its best.

Copyright 2015 by John L. Flynn, Ph.D.