



the movies
Louise Snider

Satire on movies is wrong more than it's right

What do you get if you cross a "Dr. Strangelove" with a "Network"? "Wrong Is Right" (R), a blistering mixture of satire, black comedy and caricature.

"Wrong Is Right" was written and directed by Richard Brooks, the director of "Looking for Mr. Goodbar," "In Cold Blood," and "Elmer Gantry."

His latest high-energy film is as topical as today's headlines and maybe tomorrow's. It incorporates all the bogies that quicken the social-political pulse — Arab terrorists, CIA plots, nuclear blackmail — and twines them around an American presidential election.

At the center of the frenetic activity is a television newscaster so involved with events that the line between making the news and reporting it is continually disappearing. Sean Connery has the role of the newscaster, Patrick Hale. Hale is the network darling. His sensational on-the-spot reporting (he does his own camera work as well as reporting) wins high ratings and big bucks for his news show.

He is always where things are happening, whether it is a "funny farm" where people act out their fantasies of violence or a terrorist training camp where people in uniform do the same thing.

AS FOR HIS personal opinions, all we know about his is that he is a dedicated cynic. "We're in show business, baby," he tells his network boss. Although Connery displays his usual magnetism as the television reporter, the character is seriously flawed.

He is presented as a larger-than-life character, with access to presidents and potentates, yet his scruples are so confusing, or poorly defined, that he is neither hero nor anti-hero. Yet, he certainly isn't intended to be representative of the common man with ordinary strengths and weaknesses.

The same confusion of values and goals holds true of the film in general. It vibrates with manic energy that is unfocused. It aims at too many targets: wiretapping, conspiracy, political assassination. So politics is a dirty business. So our leaders are not paragons of virtue. So oil is power. So what's new? Books and movies have mined this vein for decades, but Brooks jumps in with hysterical frenzy as if he has discovered something new.

What is new about Brooks' black comedy as distinguished from other "comedies" is the excess of graphic violence. Violence pervades this movie. At the beginning, Hale asks, "Is murder as American as apple pie?" From "Wrong Is Right," the answer appears to be "yes."

THE DEATH toll from violence in this movie is a heavy one: throat cuttings, knife-kick murders and fanatics making human bombs of themselves are a sampling of the lethal action. If the increase of violence in American life is a genuine concern of Brooks, why make a film that perpetuates violent images and, perhaps, a growing callousness?

As with anyone using a scattergun approach, occasionally Brooks scores. The dialogue between the CIA director (G.D. Spradlin) and the President (George Grizzard) is especially droll and on-target.

"Wrong Is Right" isn't wrong all the time, just most of the time.

what's at the movies

BEACH GIRLS (R). A lighthearted, if a little ribald, tale of summer vacation antics at a borrowed beach house.

CHARIOTS OF FIRE (PG). True and compelling story of two runners. One runs for the glory of God, the other to battle bigotry. Outstanding and elevating movie.

DEATHTRAP (PG). The film version of Ira Levin's comedy suspense thriller starring Michael Caine, Christopher Reeve and Dyan Cannon.

IF YOU COULD SEE WHAT I HEAR (PG). Based on the life and experiences of Tom Sullivan. True story of bitter-sweet love and the fun and games most college students engage in just prior to entering the "real" world.

MEPHISTO. Academy Award winner for Best Foreign Language film. Based on the Klaus Mann novel, a violent indictment of the Nazis, which was banned for decades in Germany.

MONTENEGRO. Bored wife of diplomat in Switzerland discovers earthy pleasures in cafe where Yugoslav workers meet.

PORKY'S (R). Director Bob Clark's rowdy, raunchy comedy of adolescence derives its title from the name of a notorious redneck dive, to which six lusty teen-agers are hypnotically drawn.

QUEST FOR FIRE (R). This science-fiction epic follows three courageous warriors forced to venture beyond their tribal lands when their life-sustaining flame is lost during a battle.

SOGGY BOTTOM U.S.A. (PG). Comedy starts with annual coon dog race and goes from crawdad racin' to airboat chasin'. Stars Ben Johnson, Lois Nettleton, Dub Taylor, Anthony Zebe and Jack Elam.

SUZANNE. Dilemma of a sensual young girl who, against her better judgment, falls in love with a man she knows is wrong for her. Stars Ben Johnson, Lois Nettleton, Dub Taylor, Anthony Zebe and Jack Elam.

THE SWORD AND THE SORCERER (R). From a time before history comes a tale of wizards, warriors, kings and kingdoms. Stars Lee Holsley, Kathleen Beller, Simon MacCorkindale, George Maharis and Richard Lynch, directed by Albert Pyun.

VICTOR/VICTORIA (PG). Julie Andrews in Blake Edwards' comedy about unemployed singer who becomes smashing success after becoming "Victor," a drag queen.

MOVIE RATING GUIDE

- G General audiences admitted.
PG Parental guidance suggested. All ages admitted.
R Restricted. Adult must accompany person under 18.
X No one under 18 admitted.

Adds sweetness

Fungus enhances wine taste



wine
Richard Watson

One of the most curious and remarkable occurrences in the world of winemaking centers around a fungus that can attack grapes in the field and cause them to shrivel into an ugly mess. Visually it is repulsive, but viticulturally it is most appealing.

The condition, known variously as noble rot, pourriture noble and Botrytis cinerea, occurs only infrequently, but when it does the grapes are transformed into something dramatically different. It happens that certain years find the growing conditions favorable for its onset. In these, ripe grapes are left on the vine following their normal time of harvest, and the fungus begins to develop.

The grapes at this time are ripe and full of natural sugar. The rot then infests them, fully covering the skin with a gooey substance. The greater the action of the fungus, i.e., the longer it continues to act, the greater the water loss and the higher the ratio of residual sugar remains, leaving an ugly berry full of highly concentrated sweetness.

WHEN THE NOBLE rot attacks a field of grapes, harvest usually is delayed until well into the fall. Experimentation with artificially inducing it has been only moderately successful. In

general, it is an act of chance whether conditions will be correct in any given year.

When it fails to develop (usually due to a lack of humidity in the field) or when it occurs before the grapes are ripe, disaster falls on the grape grower. When it succeeds a glorious year can be at hand.

The phenomenon reaches its highest level in the acres of Barossa and Sauternes in southern Bordeaux and along the banks of the Mosel and Rhine in Germany. In the former, the grapes involved are Semillon and Sauvignon Blanc, and the resultant condition produces the sweet, lush, jammy, golden wines that carry those names.

These develop in the bottle for decades and gradually develop into intense, complex, mouth-filling wines that are sipped very slowly, as dessert accompaniments. A good Sauternes can

be enjoyed 20 to 40 years after harvest, amazing in a white wine.

In Germany the grape involved is ideally the Riesling, though Scheurebe and Muller-Thurgau also may be afflicted. Noble rot operates on Riesling grapes to produce Auslese, Beerenauslese and (more fun to say than write out) Trockenbeerenauslese, these honey-ripe, apricot/peaches, warm wines which, at their occasional best, are the quintessence of style and enjoyment for some.

WITH GENERATIONS of producing botrytized wines behind them, the French and Germans have long demonstrated their eloquence to the world. In California the first commercial ven-

ture of this kind dates back only to 1968 and Karl Wente. The early years of California production saw a variety of terms used to describe these wines, though "late harvest" seems now to be most commonly used. Most people agree that these efforts have been less than fully successful, the problem being the development of acidity to balance the lush fruit. Probably Chateau St. Jean and the Joseph Phelps Vineyard have been most successful, both with Riesling and, on occasion, Gewurztraminer. Both wineries have produced some remarkable successes, and each has developed a following.

Other grapes that have been commercially experimented with to produce wines of unusual character in California include Semillon and Sauvignon Blanc, of course, but also Zinfandel, French Colombard, Chenin Blanc, Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon. It is to be hoped that such practices with those grapes will remain at the novelty level, although some have been dramatically successful.

Dine Out



Tonight

Auditions announced

Auditions for people who sing, move well and can act, 18-24, will be held at The Community House, 2-4 p.m. Wednesday by Henry K. Martin Productions.

Martin is auditioning for a musical revue on a Hollywood theme to be produced at The Community House June 18.

Those auditioning should bring a resume, photograph (doesn't have to be professional quality), be prepared to sing and read material that will be supplied.

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