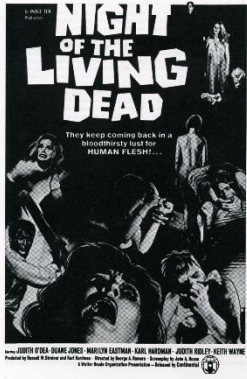


Short Review: "Night of the Living Dead" (1968) by Dr. John L. Flynn



Night of the Living Dead (1968). Image Ten, b/w, 96min. Director: George Romero. Producers: Russell Streiner and Karl Hardman. Screenwriter: John A. Russo. Cast: Judith O'Dea, Duane Jones, Karl Hardman, Keith Wayne, Julia Ridley, and Marilyn Eastman. Radioactive fall-out from an aborted Venus probe revives the dead and turns them loose on an unsuspecting farmhouse (and reputedly the world). The mindless corpses stumble along - at an unstoppable pace - in search of humans for food. Society collapses, and a few people huddle together in a darkened house, trying to stay alive until morning (when they hope the dead will return to their graves). Resourceful African-American hero Jones and screaming heroine O'Dea manage to survive wave after wave of the dead. Ironically, Jones emerges victoriously from the farmhouse only to be shot dead himself by members of a makeshift militia. Filmed on weekends in Pittsburgh with amateurs and borrowed equipment, Romero's low-budget chiller is one of the most successful independents of all time. The motion picture was a popular feature for midnight showings, and acquired cult status on college campuses. It has also spawned two sequels, "Dawn of the Dead" (1979) and "Day of the Dead" (1985), a 1990 remake, and a host of imitators. When viewed as a document from the Sixties, the movie tends to reflect the tone of rebellion, chaos, racial anxiety, confusion, paranoia, and mistrust of that time.

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