

Fear of spiders turns into a pile of bland glop

by Azed Majeed

Arachnophobia
directed by Frank Marshall
produced by Amblin Entertainment

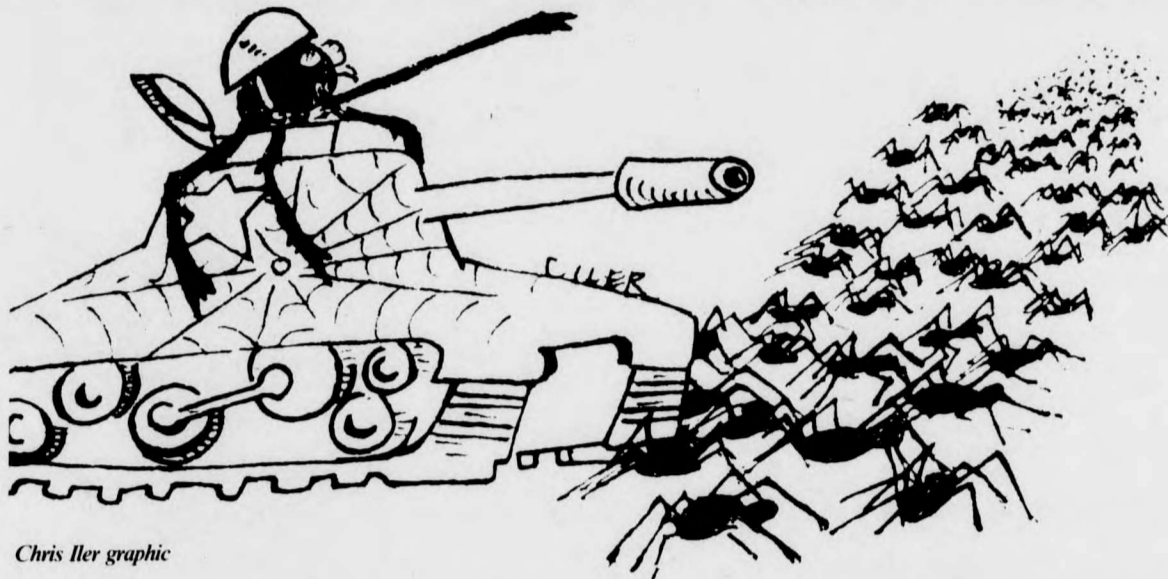
The other day I was having a conversation with my girlfriend (I know what you're thinking, but, she's not imaginary — I swear! That's right; she's real!) that centred around fears and phobias. Apart from an inexplicable, irrational fear that I am somehow related to Raymond Burr, my greatest mortal fear is reptiles; especially snakes.

Yuk!

My girlfriend (her name is Tina, by the way) said that, apart from a recent, overwhelming fear that she is throwing her life away on the wrong man, she fears insects most of all. Interesting pair, aren't we?

Anyway, this brings me to the film *Arachnophobia*, directed by Frank Marshall. Marshall, who is a cohort of Steven Spielberg, seems caught up in the All-American, Hollywood, all flash, no substance, pure entertainment, formula, commercial, "it's all in the marketing" system of movie-making. He must be a York film graduate.

Arachnophobia is the fear of spiders; if you happen to be afraid of the creepy little things, you will probably find some exciting moments in the film. Other than this



Chris Iler graphic

basic manipulation, however, there is no reason to like it.

Arachnophobia opens with an etymologist/explorer (Julian Sands) searching for newer and icier specimens in the Brazilian rainforest. He comes across a new breed of superspider which is extremely poisonous and very resilient. The killer spiders, through some inefficient shipping procedures, arrive in a small California town.

Oddly enough, these unwanted visitors arrive at the same time as the new big city doctor (Jeff Daniels) and his little family. Coincidentally, Daniels' character has a specific fear of spiders induced by a trauma he suffered

as a baby. Help me, please!!!

The rest of the film follows the typical *Jaws* meets *The Birds* meets *The Swarm* meets *Invasion of the Bodysnatchers* formula, which is: the main character is a) not successful at his/her new job, b) not content with his/her mundane life, c) a promiscuous immoral slob and/or d) a pious moral monster who must be either tested or punished. The protagonist (don't be alarmed; that's just a fancy way of saying main character) spends most of the film fighting off the intruders, which are multiplying in direct proportion to the hero's attempts to stop them. Frisky little critters, are they not? Then the protagonist has a big

showdown with the bees/shark/spiders and blah, blah, blah...

The main problem with a formulaic structure is the lack of suspense which is necessary to sustain interest in what has usually become a tired genre. I had no trouble guessing exactly who was going to die and when they were going to get it (with a little help from the sinister music which would begin just before each murder).

When a film falls into a particular category (ie — western, film noir, screwball comedy), it is important to go beyond the conventions within that category in order to transcend the existing patriarchal system and, ergo,

forever alter the structure of the universe through examination of the epistemological questions which necessitate a quantum perspective...oops! Sorry about that...I...err...got a little carried away.

Basically, what I'm trying to say is that this movie is not very good. As a matter of fact, it sucks. When you get right down to it, it is really, really annoying — I HATE THIS MOVIE! ONLY WIMPS ARE AFRAID OF SPIDERS, OKAY! ONLY A TOTAL NINCOMPOOP WOULD ENJOY THIS PILE OF BLAND GLOP! CAN I GET A WITNESS, HERE! ...ahem, I feel much better, now.

Arachnophobia does not live up to its predecessors because it fails to create any original concepts or characterizations. The phobia sufferer is a direct Hitchcock rip-off; however, unlike Hitchcock, the team of Marshall and Spielberg do not have the guts to get behind the greasy psycho-sexual motivations which produce these irrational fears.

This is a homogenized, purified, Spielbergified version of Hitchcock. Kinda like your mother's church theatre group doing *A Clockwork Orange*.

Anyway, as I mentioned before, I am not afraid of spiders; that may have some bearing on my strong disapproval of this waste of \$7.50. I am afraid of reptiles, though. Hmm... maybe I should see that "Mutated Turtles" movie...

COMMUNITY AND LEGAL SERVICES PROGRAMME (CLASP) FINANCIAL STATEMENTS APRIL 30, 1990

We have examined the balance sheet of Community and Legal Aid Services Programme as at April 30, 1990 and the statements of members' equity, and revenue and expenses for the year then ended. Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly included such tests and other procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly the financial position of Community and Legal Aid Services Programme as at April 30, 1990 and the results of its operations for the year then ended in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Toronto, Ontario,
June 30, 1990.

Pepperman & Partners
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

BALANCE SHEET AS AT APRIL 30, 1990

ASSETS	1990	1989
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash	\$ ---	\$ 6,061
Accounts receivable	13,589	---
Term deposits, at cost	298,292	---
	\$ 312,381	\$ 6,061
FIXED ASSETS		
Computer hardware	\$ 13,868	\$ 5,614
Furniture and equipment	472	422
	\$ 14,320	\$ 3,886
Less: Accumulated depreciation	2,622	2,072
	\$ 11,698	\$ 1,814
	\$ 324,277	\$ 7,875
LIABILITIES		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Cheques issued in excess of cash on hand	\$ 6,167	\$ ---
Accounts payable and accruals	1,657	2,056
Unearned revenue	298,792	---
	\$ 306,623	\$ 2,056
MEMBERS' EQUITY		
MEMBERS' SURPLUS	\$ 17,654	\$ 5,819
	\$ 324,277	\$ 7,875

STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES FOR THE YEAR ENDED APRIL 30, 1990

	1990	1989
REVENUE		
Ontario Legal Aid Programme Grant	\$ 168,266	\$ 159,000
Student fees - York University	44,607	36,320
Legal and Literary Society	6,250	6,250
Other	3,252	1,688
Work/study fund	3,000	---
S.F.E.D. Grant	---	1,911
	\$ 225,875	\$ 205,169
EXPENSES		
Summer students' salaries	\$ 97,050	\$ 92,610
Secretarial salaries	52,765	50,993
Counsel salaries	25,753	22,135
Part-time counsel	15,055	16,703
Duplicating	7,391	6,330
Telephone and long distance charges	5,885	6,311
Office and general	4,865	8,237
Books	2,189	1,863
Professional fees	1,810	1,500
Transportation	515	675
Conferences and seminars	202	772
Bank charges	26	31
Depreciation	258	720
	\$ 214,040	\$ 208,820
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES (EXPENSES OVER REVENUE) BEFORE REIMBURSEMENT	\$ 11,835	\$ (3,651)
REIMBURSEMENT OF EXPENSES BY CLIENTS	---	2,946
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES (EXPENSES OVER REVENUE) FOR THE YEAR	\$ 11,835	\$ (705)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS APRIL 30, 1990

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICY

(a) As the organization is not incorporated, the accompanying financial statements do not include any other assets, liabilities, revenues and expenses of its members or other Osgoode Hall Law School activities.

(b) Fixed assets

Fixed assets are stated at cost. It is the organization's policy to provide depreciation on its fixed assets using the diminishing balance method at the following rates:

Computer hardware	30%
Furniture and equipment	20%

STATEMENT OF MEMBERS' EQUITY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED APRIL 30, 1990

	1990	1989
SURPLUS - BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$ 5,819	\$ 6,524
Excess of revenue over expenses (expenses over revenue) for the year	11,835	(705)
SURPLUS - END OF YEAR	\$ 17,654	\$ 5,819

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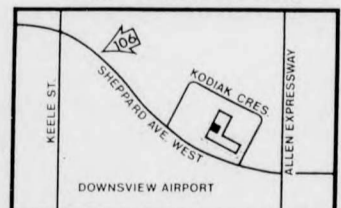
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