

Annie Hall (15)

My introduction for this film was a summary from various websites...

"The 1977 film, from a screenplay written by Allen and Marshall Brickman, and produced by Allen's manager, Charles H Joffe, stars Allen as Alvy Singer, who tries to figure out the reasons for the failure of his relationship with the eponymous female lead, played by Diane Keaton in a role written specifically for her. Winner of four Oscars, four BAFTAs and a Golden Globe, the film ranks as one of the best, and funniest, American films ever made."

And nine of the eighteen attendees said that they really enjoyed it, eight of us (author included) found it to be indulgent twaddle. (One other attendee left the screening about fifteen minutes before the end, so I am counting her as being in the latter camp).

That being said, there were a couple of laugh out loud moments, as well as some amusing situations. Directorially, Allen also cleverly used the split screen to counterpoint Annie's and Alvy's views of their relationship in their separate psychotherapy sessions, and directly spoke to the audience on a number of occasions. But for me, these few interesting and funny moments were outweighed by the pretentiousness of the rest of the movie.

The film was very much of its era (mid seventies), and exemplifies the American culture where psychotherapy is normal and multiple relationships and reflections on past lovers etc are not atypical. (Thanks to two attendees for this insight.) It was also a tad misogynistic, with Alvy's attitude towards Annie at times extremely frustrating and alien to contemporary viewing, as was his friend Max's comment about his relationship with sixteen-year-old twin sisters.

There was a lot of debate and discussion after the screening — which is exactly what the Film Study Group is about! Differences of opinion are the grist to our mill.

Kim Hathrell