

Blu-Ray Review: Check Out Original ‘The Crazies’ Before Remake

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on February 23, 2010 - 11:22am

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CHICAGO – Before you go and check out Timothy Olyphant and Radha Mitchell in Breck Eisner’s remake of George A. Romero’s “The Crazies” this weekend, pick up the original on Blu-ray from the great indie horror house Blue Underground. “The Crazies” is a fantastic example of low budget horror filmmaking and ’70s paranoia from one of the genre’s best directors.



Blu-Ray Rating: **3.5/5.0**

1973’s “The Crazies” came at a difficult time in Romero’s career. He had yet to recapture the magic of 1968’s “Night of the Living Dead” and this would be the third film in a row that didn’t quite connect with audiences (after 1971’s “There’s Always Vanilla” and 1972’s “Jack’s Wife”). Of course, the late ’70s would feature a resurgence for the horror auteur with “Martin” and one of the best genre films of all time in “Dawn of the Dead”. But “The Crazies” was kind of lost in the career gap between the first two “Dead” movies.

Once known as “Code Name: Trixie,” that title referred to the experimental bio-weapon accidentally unleashed on a small town in Pennsylvania. The virus makes enemies of loved ones, turning neighbors into maniacal lunatics. Romero’s career has been defined by turning man against each other and “The Crazies” actually fits firmly into his zombie filmography. In many ways, the crisis of “The Crazies” is not far from the “Dead” films in that no one can be trusted, even a loved one.



The Crazies was released on Blu-ray on February 23rd, 2010.

Photo credit: Blue Underground

I'm a huge fan of Romero's work but "The Crazies" has always left me a bit conflicted. The film is best viewed as an example of how to make an effective film with little money. Take for example a shot of a body falling down a set of stairs. Romero cuts it in such a way that you'll never notice that there was no stunt man and no actual fall. Throughout "The Crazies" he finds clever ways to disguise the lack of money behind the film. But as for actual tension, "The Crazies" hasn't held up as well as I remembered. I'd take most Romero films over it in a heartbeat but even sub-par Romero is a must-own for true horror fans.

Especially with a commentary track this spectacular. Romero and William Lustig reminisce about the making of the film and point out the little tricks like the aforementioned staircase bit. Romero is completely unafraid to point out the film's flaws and what he would do differently now. He's great at this kind of track and Lustig is a perfect partner.

Other special features include "The Cult Film Legacy of Lynn Lowry," theatrical trailers, and TV spots. The film itself is presented in an average 1080p transfer with an English DTS-HD mono track that fits the film well.

We'll let you know what we think of the new version of "The Crazies" soon but before you head to that cinematic nightmare, check out where the bad dream began.

'The Crazies' is released by Blue Underground and stars Lane Carroll, W.G. McMillan, Harold Wayne Jones, Lloyd Hollar, Richard France, Lynn Lowry, and Richard Liberty. It was written by Paul McCollough & George A. Romero and directed by Romero. It was released on Blu-ray on February 23rd, 2010. It is rated R.



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