

QLH-S2E9: Candyman (2021)

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SPEAKERS

Jessi Chartier, Jen Myers

J Jessi Chartier 00:04

Welcome to Quiet Little Horrors. Here we talk about the films that creep under your skin and take up residence in the dark.

J Jen Myers 00:17

Before we get started as a reminder, when we talk about movies, we need to talk about everything in the movie, so there will be spoilers involved. If you haven't seen the movie or want to refresh your memory before you listen, you can stop now and do that before coming back. Let's talk about Candyman from 2021. And urban legend comes to life when Anthony an artist explores the history and significance of the Candyman and his own community. All right, Jesse, it's time to take on the new Candyman. Are we ready?

J Jessi Chartier 00:51

I'm so excited. Let's do it.

J Jen Myers 00:53

Yeah, this is it. I feel like this is gonna be a really I don't even know what the word is. There's there's a lot of discussion to be had here.

J Jessi Chartier 01:00

This movie just oh, it has. So first off. Again, we've talked about this on the podcast, I can find the good in any movie. And I do really like the movies that we choose for our podcast, there aren't very many that I dislike. There's just so much to talk about with this one. I mean, this is a

movie that leans into the legend that came out in the original in 92. It takes that story of racism and my Intel's how it is now you know modernizes it a little bit and really beautiful. Like not subtle ways. But beautiful, everyday kind of ways. It reminds me of Did you ever see Lovecraft County?

J Jen Myers 01:45

No, I didn't actually I knew of it. But that's really good.

J Jessi Chartier 01:49

Because it it tackles. It doesn't tackle it just racism is present. It's it's the everyday pneus of it from what it was like in the 40s and 50s of how it was ever present. Just kind of known, and the navigation and the code switching that the communities had to do what is portrayed in a way where the characters are like, this is the life we have. And because it's so every day, it is haunting to the viewer. And I feel like that is not quite what Candyman does they it does it with a little bit of sharpness to it. You know, like when they talk about, like there's a scene in Candyman where I cannot remember where the scene was going on. But they were talking about the gentrification of Cabrini Green. And they were talking about how the systemic gentrification happens where you invite artists into an area, preferably white artists into an area for the low rent, so they can do their artwork, and then raise the rents because the race demographics have changed. And then it becomes more gentrified, etc. And people who are living there can no longer afford to live there. Like the fact that they are willing to just be like, Yeah, that's the fact like, this is very factual. This is how the BS works, was just really refreshing to me. Because so many times, especially in horror movies, they tried to be subtle, they tried to go around the subtlety of it. And it's almost like this movie has flipped, where it's, the subtlety is not around the racism. The subtlety is around the story. And I think that that is really just beautifully done. And I there's a lot of stuff I want to talk about with this film. That's interesting.

J Jen Myers 03:43

I like all the things that you said, and the things that, you know, are the themes and some of the aspects of this film. But I gotta say up top that I don't, for the for me, this film kind of felt felt a little flat. I don't feel like it's a little bit of the same deal. We talked about what the original Candyman, where it felt like, in that case, we said that we didn't quite think that the filmmaker filmmakers were able to pull off the the magnitude of the story that they started to tell. And I don't think it's entirely the same case in this with this movie, because I feel like that filmmakers were very capable. But I still feel like there were so many ideas and concepts and maybe you pointed out something there with like, the story being subtle, that kind of hurt it for me, and I honestly came out feeling like it was very muddled. So I that that was my experience with it. But I also need to say up top that I want to say that I had ridiculously high expectations for this movie. Like I may have set myself up for the disappointment. I was really, really, really, really looking forward to this film. I like the original film, and it's just like, you know, living here in Chicago and knowing what the area that was Cabrini Green is now which is a super basically rich, you know, completely gentrified. I area, it just felt like okay, this was a natural opportunity for a sequel to the story, right? Like it's all going along on the same themes like it seems

almost like a no brainer that somebody needs to take that fact and build a story out of it. And so I was really excited about this. I'm also a huge fan of this director, Nia de Costa, she her first film, Little Woods, I highly recommend this to anybody. So I was like, you know, 200% on board for the director, I was like, 200%, on board for the story. So I think that maybe I might have set myself up to be a little disappointed when that story was, like you said, subtle, at best, or like, are in my word muddled. And so I had a little bit more of a difficult time with it.

J Jessi Chartier 05:41

Yeah, that's totally understandable. I think that there is, this is a movie to make, because you do have the original 92 That you're contending with. So you have expectations of it. You have really great topical conversations, things that people want to talk about. A lot of white people don't know how to talk about it. Right. So it's, there's just a lot to the film, but I feel like they did. I don't know, I think that they did a great job on some some of the really powerful subtleties. So here's a great example of one of the subtleties that I absolutely adored white privilege. Let's talk about white privilege for a minute. Thank God, first off, this movie does not have a mate like a protagonist. That's a white protagonist. Thank you, by the way.

J Jen Myers 06:26

Yeah, it makes it really easy miss stuff that we could avoid this time around, you know, oh, well, it's still it's still happened some time. That's true, right? I mean, I guess given this group of filmmakers who know what they're doing, they knew that and didn't have any interest in doing that. So yes, good thing to fix right off the bat.

J Jessi Chartier 06:45

Yes, exactly. Exactly. Let's let's keep that train movement. Let's keep moving on with with all kinds of films. So anyway, but the thing that I that that's I noticed whether this I hope this was intentional, if not maybe I'm just making something up in my head, but the only people that actually call Candyman are those who Well, there's two right Anthony calls Candyman at the very beginning, but I would argue that he is slightly removed from his own community. He wants to fight for it. Like he's, he's active, he's fighting for the community. But he also doesn't buy into a lot of, well, he doesn't buy into the urban legend. And I don't know really what that is a clear metaphor for if it's a metaphor for anything at all. But the remainder of the characters it throughout the movie, it's like bookended by Anthony, and then on the other end, it's his girlfriend they call Candyman. Everybody else that calls Candyman in the movie. Do so very tongue in cheek Lee, like, this isn't real. And they're all white. So there's this and they're white women, often young. So there's this sense of why, like, I picked up on him like, Ooh, this is white privilege, because the idea that, Oh, I can do this, it's not going to hurt me. Like there's no threat there. There's no real reason to be worried, is like a perfect example of white privilege in this movie, right? And that, yes, like really profound to me. And I was like, Oh, yes,

J Jen Myers 08:14

no, I mean, I'm glad that you pointed that out. Because that did not occur to me and I have to be honest that for one of the things that bothered me in this movie was the fact that I felt like

be honest that for one of the things that bothered me in this movie, was the fact that I felt like the kills the times when Candyman shows up and causes some damage, for the most part are with characters that I found super annoying, and not let you know which I guess that part is kind of good, because you're like, Alright, come on Candyman. Let's take care of this. Also, like they're, they're all exactly incidental, but they're very much side characters, you know, especially the one towards the which is, like, deep into the movie when they have the scene at the high school, right? And you have a bunch of snotty teenager in the high school bathroom, being a little snotty teenagers and doing these like that. And just like I don't like, and I got the idea of what's going on here. But these are all characters. We don't know them. And we have no, you know, no, no idea what's really going on there. So I found that initially kind of like that harder to follow for me as I'm going through the film. And like I said, I think that it was one of the few things that I felt were muddled in this. However, I will say I really appreciate you bringing that framework to bear on this because I didn't I didn't think about it and you are absolutely right. I think the that the annoying aspects that I pointed out are there for a reason. They are being annoying. They're being super flip. And super like we don't actually believe in this because we don't have to believe this is real and we can live our lives pretending that it's not actually real. And we can afford to Yeah, treat treat it with this kind of casual flippancy and I do think that is a is a powerful statement and it's a great thing to have in there. I like I said I feel like if I feel like there had to be be a way to weave it into the story a little bit better. Because for me watching the movie, all those scenes did was take me out of everything that was going on.

J Jessi Chartier 10:08

Yes, I don't disagree with you there. And there was I mean, the scene in the bathroom with the girls. You know, there was the, again, a great, great example. There was the young black girl who was there who was hiding. Yeah, and, you know, the the threat of, of just life, right? Because it sure life that's, you know, stacked against her. But it would have been, you could have done, we could have done something super simple as in like, she was their next door neighbor, right? Like something as simple as that, like, tied her Instature in a little bit more to be like, Oh, I know who this person is. I have empathy for her. I know how she connects. And but she also doesn't really connect. Yeah, and so maybe there's something in that too. But it's it's clear that Candyman is something for B that is something that is a threat that only certain people can recognize and see. And that there is a whole nother group of people out there who don't think it's that bad. And when they don't think it's that bad, and they play around with it, it knocks them on their ass. And I feel like that was such a great message. You know, it's like people wake up. Like, dude, I hate the term don't want to do I shouldn't say, Hey, I don't like the term woke. I love the idea of people just being better.

J Jen Myers 11:30

Well, I mean, that term has got so co-opted at this point, though. Basically overused by people who are using it as you know, in the in the wrong way. So, but it's like

J Jessi Chartier 11:39

a light switch. It's like this idea of like, oh, suddenly you're now there. And it's fine. No, no,

J Jen Myers 11:44

right. That's also true. Like, it is a process that we are all constantly practicing. Yeah, exactly. Yes. But no, I agree with you on it. Like I said, I'm really glad that you pointed that out to me. And that, though, again, I'm glad we're having this conversation, because I'm hoping to be able to kind of, like understand a little bit more about why I had a difficult time with this film. And it's not because of the themes. You know, like, I'm a big fan of that. I guess it's for me, and I feel like some of these themes. Like that is such a great idea that I feel like could be a little bit more explicit without it hurting the point. And it was kind of like, oh, yeah, let's let's, let's make that explicit. I think there's an artistic way to do that, to make it explicit. You know what I mean? I don't feel like you have to there. I don't know, there's a balance between hitting people over the head with things so that it loses all sense of, you know, artistry or subtlety or things like that. But then there's also being so oblique, that people will miss it all together. And like I said, I thought to myself that, of course, there's much I miss in films, and there are many things that I am always learning about. And I fully acknowledge that. But I also feel like I'm, you know, I do think about films a lot. And I completely missed that it didn't even occur to me. So I don't know, maybe maybe I just I'm totally open to the idea that maybe I just need to work harder on some of these things. But I guess I just would have liked to have that be a little bit more explicit, because it is a really good point.

J Jessi Chartier 13:14

Yeah, I can understand that. I can understand it. It was there were moments where it could have been more like you said, explicit, but overall, I think they just did a lovely job of something like that talking about white privilege without talking about white privilege. And it just was. Yeah, I just think it did a really nice job. Here's a question that I want answered that I did not look into. Where was this actually filmed? Because they did a really nice job of location. Like the location looks like the original Cabrini Green townhouses, but I don't know if they actually filmed in the remaining row homes that are still down there.

J Jen Myers 13:54

Yeah, well, Wikipedia seems to suggest that they filmed in at least some of that area the original and and to be clear, for people who don't know the history or not from this area, there's very little of Cabrini Green, that still exists so none of the towers the last tower was pulled down and 2011 So a lot of the big target and you see those in the original Candyman that's another interesting thing looking back at the 1992 Candyman is now that it serves as this document of a place that no longer exists. And so you know, we could go back you can point people to that film and be like, that is what Cabrini Green looks like that you know, it's even though that's a fictionalized film like it was shot there. None of that exists anymore, except there are some of these smaller areas so yeah, I'm not 100% sure either. It looks like the places that they shot the when Anthony the artist is going through there's there's area there's rowhomes from what it looks like we you see this skyline in the background, it looks like what they described where the the last remaining ones are standing, but I'm not sure about that. I will say if I can like just take that and run with it just a little bit. I do think that one of the strongest points of this film is how well it first of all uses Chicago. And it's also just beautiful in

general, like this is so. So well constructed visually. And I do think that it does a really great job at capturing little bits and corners of Chicago that just feel very, very real from somebody who lives there.

J Jessi Chartier 15:29

Huh, they did a really nice job you want to talk about some of the best stuff they get.

J Jen Myers 15:33

Yeah, I mean, well, there's even just like the beginning the credits which are all these, it's looking up through a lot of the buildings, a lot of buildings in the loop and around but there's things like like if you know the Harold Washington library, right downtown, which I love and has beautiful giant green owls and kind of curlicues on on the top of it. You see that briefly, which fits in perfectly with this theme and some of the other buildings and things like that. I think that the best example of it, which is also one of my one of the moments in the film that I feel works the best and was one of the strongest for me is when Anthony goes to visit the art critic who has a apartment in Marina Towers, which is people who are not from Chicago Marina Towers are the tall corncob looking buildings that was on that Wilco album, I think that's how most people know them, but they are like, still, you can still live in them and everything. And there's the scene where Anthony goes to visit her and then you know, spoiler alert, I think we always say that is something but to know here, he then kills the art critic in her apartment there and you'll it ends up zooming out from her window. And you know, you see the whole building and then you see like the whole downtown basically without there and I feel like all of that was so well designed and also like very much in the place that it was in like that is all entirely shot in the in that building and you could never think it would be anywhere else if you know that building at all. And I thought that was really great.

J Jessi Chartier 17:07

Yeah, that is really great. One of the things that I really appreciate that they did too, is they played with the composition of the Chicago buildings like you talked about the beginning. And how it feels like you're upside down. Yes. It just did a really nice job. Like I like that I liked the the unsettling nature of a lot of the difference visuals that they used because it was I don't know it just it really hit home for me. It just was like yeah, I love the like creep factor, the uneasiness the the it's familiar but unfamiliar kind of approach to a lot of it, like liminal quality.

J Jen Myers 17:45

And for me, and I also felt like it suggested how everything is in movement. You know, like, what was what existed when they made the first movie doesn't exist anymore. And other things come in, and everything kind of, you know, gets destroyed and built up and probably destroyed again, at some point. So I feel like I got you know, a little bit of that too. I will say not to drag it back right back down. I will say I wish I had a little bit more of a sense of where the the main couple living in there the arena. And I also got to say to I feel like they also called their neighborhood today Cabrini Green, which is not a thing that people do in Chicago. Now, if you

live in that area. First of all, if you live in that area, you have a ton of money, and you probably don't have any idea of the history of that area you're living in, but whatever, okay. But it's not called Cabrini Green. We don't call it that's not the name of the neighborhood anymore. So I didn't feel like I got a sense of that actual neighborhood. Now, I don't know, it could. I don't know if that was kind of the points where it was just another generic gentrification. But I feel like there could have been a little bit more that actually connected, where they live now to, you know, the history. And I don't know, I didn't feel very grounded in their neighborhood. And again, maybe it's a thing because I'm a little bit more familiar with this area that I wanted to see more of a juxtaposition of the the history and the present day, and they talked about it, but they didn't show it. And I felt like maybe we could have shown a little bit more.

J Jessi Chartier 19:24

Yeah, that's a really good point. That's a really good point. Here's a question. What are your thoughts about the idea that Candyman was trying to move into Anthony or transcend into that? Because that was totally different from the original?

J Jen Myers 19:40

That is totally different. Yeah. That's so that I feel like there's a lot going on there, right? Yeah, for sure. I feel like it is a metaphor for because like how you mentioned specifically to where he initially calls Candyman with a little bit of that layer of not exactly invincibility, but he he's a little bit separated from I don't know what you would think, you know he I guess he has just a little bit of a layer of privilege, right with a acquired, you know wealth or position or anything like that to a certain extent that that a man of color could you know, and I think that it is kind of the flip side of that, or it's also that you can't actually really escape the past or escaped escape your roots because I also because they also and this is another thing that I felt like could have been made more explicit and we don't find out for the very late in the movie. So Anthony is specifically the little baby that was saved at the end of the original Candyman that Helen sacrifices herself for right. And we learned this from his mother who was played by the same actress who played the mother in the original one. But man, for me, I didn't. Again, this is another one where I felt like I was completely not paying attention to anything because it didn't even occur to me until the mother spelled that out towards the end. And I'm like, oh, okay, but I didn't pick up on that one at all. And I don't know if I was supposed to, or it was supposed to be a reveal. But that started to make me think that like, Oh, he's caught in this trap that he can't get out of. And I don't know if that is supposed to be a metaphor for not actually being able to get out of like a cycle of poverty or a cycle of, you know, just the the kind of burden that systemic racism will place on people. That's kind of the best I could think of is like, maybe it's just like he can't get out of this no matter what. But that doesn't seem quite right. And also, I don't think it's literally I don't think it's right in the world. And it also is a real bummer of a theme. I'm not sure if that is really what what was going on there. And I don't know, do you have a better idea?

J Jessi Chartier 21:53

I don't. Yeah, I don't I don't

J Jen Myers 21:56

I think that this is one of the things that really was sticking with me for the movie is like, I don't understand this central metaphor.

J Jessi Chartier 22:04

Yeah, I think I might have to do some reading on it. You know, I think that that's one of Yeah, and it

J Jen Myers 22:08

could be out there. Like I said, I'm definitely coming to this with, you know, a different a different lens than I think the filmmakers have. And there's probably some things that I can, you know, deepen my understanding on. So maybe grasp this better. But that was another thing that I kind of struggled a little bit with, I wasn't sure what what theme I was supposed to take away from that. And this is essentially the, the central thread of the movie to his his his transformation in an end and to the point where when he starts to kind of like, resist it, or I don't know, maybe it's not that he's resisting it, but it is also hastened by somebody else at the end of the movie, who is saying that, you know, this is this is like the cycle that we have to continue to to do. And so at some point, it's not even so much like Anthony's choice. I don't know if it really was ever his choice, but it's this other individual who is is making sure that this all happens the way he thinks it's supposed to happen. Which adds another layer into it. And so I just was kind of like, I don't know what to take away from this. Exactly. This is a lot going on here.

J Jessi Chartier 23:12

That is a lot going on here. Let's talk about the ending, because we obviously give spoilers, so do you want to explain what happens at the end? And let's talk about it.

J Jen Myers 23:20

I can try. I'm not sure if I know so. So we've got this situation where Anthony has been transforming into the Candyman and basically, like it's also pretty gruesome. He's like falling apart at the same time, which I think the first one is that he gets stung by a bee in the beginning. And like, throughout the whole movie, I'm like, Oh, my God, can you go to a doctor because this looks awful. Because basically, it starts like eating his flesh. You know? And it just goes on and on and on. And I'm like, why is so nobody telling him to go to the doctor? This is horrifying. But that's neither here nor there. That's just me. But anyway, so he's and he's basically kind of like falling apart at certain points. So he goes, he basically disappears, doesn't he? Yes. And his girlfriend Bri is trying to find him. And I think she traces them to a laundromat that Anthony had visit earlier in the film run are owned by a name name. Burke, I believe who knew the original Legend. So this is a guy who had some historical knowledge about both original like the old 1890s Candyman and also went went down. Like I think in the 70s we see a scene a scene about that, too. Anyway, turns out Burke has is the one I referenced who is

trying to make sure that Anthony does his full transformation and to Candyman and keeps this thing going and he ends up kidnapping Bri and taking her where he has Anthony and I guess he's I think he's doing like some sort of, I don't know, it's almost like a ritual and he actually literally saws off what's left of Anthony's hand which is not a lot at this point and puts a hook on it. So that you know he is he is making sure Burke is making sure that Anthony actually does become Candyman and then Bri, Brianna, she runs away and then I think kills Burke. And then the police show up and they shoot Anthony. Oh, yeah. Okay, so they shoot Anthony and they arrest Bri and she's in the police car and she sees her reflection in the rearview mirror and she calls Candyman and Candyman comes and kills the police. And that's it. So this is like, I was already confused before all this happened. And then all of this happened. And I'm like, Whoa, okay. What do I do with this? Because there's a there's even more going on here.

J Jessi Chartier 25:44

Yeah, I feel like the the end scene could use an entire podcast, or even just a mini. I do love the fact, though, that Brianna at the end, flips the narrative on Candyman where he is no longer something to be afraid of, but he is something to be used to the advantages that she needs. And that was neat. That was that was unique to me. Because up until that point, Candyman was something to be avoided.

J Jen Myers 26:11

Well, yeah, obviously, I almost thought that that was also kind of like, though, like it was a bad thing that she had no other option but to reach out to him. Yes.

J Jessi Chartier 26:19

100%. I don't disagree with that. She was backed into a corner.

J Jen Myers 26:23

Right.

J Jessi Chartier 26:26

But I do find it interesting that that was the direction she took.

J Jen Myers 26:29

Yeah, no. And it was one of those things where it's kind of like, no, absolutely it is. I like that. I guess I was looking at kind of like, well, if I take a take kind of like a metaphor from this, I'm trying really hard. Is that saying that? Yeah, you get backed into a corner and you have no other options, but to perpetuate the cycle again? Because nobody really gets like, I guess true. I don't know. That's true.

J Jessi Chartier 26:55
I mean, she doesn't like I don't blame her at all.

J Jen Myers 26:57
No, she makes the the sensible decision in that moment. I guess. I'm trying to figure out what the context says about the fact that that is the sensible decision to make, you know, like she's, she's trapped in a unjust situation. And so this is a power that we have to to get out of it. But has this price?

J Jessi Chartier 27:19
Yes.

J Jen Myers 27:21
Yeah. I also feel like I'm not 100% sure what the hell Burke was trying to do. Like, I kind of get it, but I also don't kind of get it. If that makes sense.

J Jessi Chartier 27:33
I do. I think that there are some messages that we're just gonna miss. Yeah, as white women, I think we're just gonna miss them.

J Jen Myers 27:39
And there's, that's what I'm like, I'm trying to say this, not in a sense of like, this sucked, because I didn't understand it. It's in the sense of like, I just didn't understand this. And I'm trying to understand it.

J Jessi Chartier 27:50
Yes. Totally, totally. Yeah,

J Jen Myers 27:53
I will say if I can say real quick, I was mentioned Burke, I do just want to throw in there too. I'd love the actor who plays Burke, Colman Domingo, who I think has had a year this year. And he's amazing. And Zola, and even though I didn't quite get the character in this movie, but he is

does a very, very well, and he's very, he's very convincing. And I just think he's a great actor. I just want to throw that in there.

J Jessi Chartier 28:15

Yes. Can we do you want to talk more about that? I don't know if

J Jen Myers 28:19

I have anything more to say. I just think he's great. He does really well. And also to be let me be clear, though, I feel like every everybody in this film, I think does a great job. It's all the acting I think is really good. For me. The only problems I have is I just like is that I feel like it gets kind of muddled. And there's so many so much subtext going on and I'm not quite sure always what to take out of it. Because sometimes it also seems to contradict, but I don't think that but every other aspect of the film is great. I think all of the actors do a great job. It's like I mentioned before, it's visually absolutely stunning. And so yeah, it's Yeah, I don't know. There are definitely things I liked about it. And I think the two biggest things is the visual aspects and the actors.

J Jessi Chartier 29:01

Yes, I love the visual aspects of it. I think that the the visual the visuals were very artistic and I liked how the characters felt more developed in this rendition of Candyman then in the previous and I don't know if that I don't know if that's just because the industry and storytelling has or if there was a better budget or whatever but I just the characters were better developed here.

J Jen Myers 29:24

I want to think I think you are right about that. I think almost it's almost like to a point where I feel like that maybe contributes a little bit to the muddling because most almost all the characters are very well rounded. Yeah, and it's almost like too much sometimes but you're absolutely right about that is that a lot of these a lot even the side even the side character except like I mentioned the annoying side characters they get killed even though we discuss they seem to have a purpose in another way but a lot of the other side characters who are not annoying also have like you know, rich full lives and opinions about things which is good. Like breeze brother and his partner and you know, things like that.

J Jessi Chartier 30:02

Yes, yes, the characters, which is great. I've done nothing else to add to that. Do we want to talk at all about just the general nature of the the calling of the Candyman? How it has to be done in a mirror? Sure. We we haven't really done any research on it. But I feel like we should at least talk about it. Because it's similar to like the Bloody Mary. Yes. But there's like so much around. Why a mirror? Like where did that come from?

J Jen Myers 30:28

I don't know. Yeah, you're right. It probably does have some sort of roots in like other stories like that. I'm not, I'm not sure. I'm

J Jessi Chartier 30:35

gonna look it up over here.

J Jen Myers 30:37

Let's find notes. But I do think another thing in this movie is that it did feel like calling and was really, I don't know, was there anything else in this film around calling Candyman other than saying it in the mirror? Because for some reason, I'm having an idea. Like there had to be something else going on. But maybe not.

J Jessi Chartier 30:54

Let me see, I'm actually going to look at the Bloody Mary folklore to Yeah, actually, I

J Jen Myers 30:57

think you're hitting on something else that I missed a little bit in this film, that that was a little bit more in the first one, which is the idea of folklore and urgent urban legends. I think that this one didn't really pull out that thread as much as I would have liked. And then the first one I don't think did it amazingly well. But I think that coming to it from kind of the academic standpoint of the main character in the 92 movie got a little bit more conceptual about the idea of the power urban legends have. And I think that that is something that this film could have utilized. I think it would have helped maybe it's just me, I really like urban legends and folklore and things like that. But I feel like it could provide a little bit more of a conceptual context for some of these, you know, maybe slightly muddled storyline it because it put it back in there in some ways. There was a Anthony kind of explored that through his art, and he tied in into recent events and things like that. I think it was good. But I don't know, I feel like it could have dug a little bit more into folklore as a concept. As for some of these things, because that is a very big part of the story. And I say folklore, in the sense of different than definitely like, somebody, somebody says, I heard you know, it's like all the girls, the high school girls, right. Like, I heard that if you look into a mirror, and you see Candyman five times he appears, and that is a thing that people do and say, in the movie, and otherwise, you know, especially when it comes to like Bloody Mary and those type of stories, but the first one I feel like really dug into what does it mean, for community to have stories like that? And I don't think this one got into that as much, but I would have liked to see more of that.

J Jessi Chartier 32:41

Hmm, yeah, make sense? That does make sense. I mean, there was so much history in the first one, that it feels a little lackluster in the second, but maybe they were leaning on the fact that you eventually learned that Anthony is the history. You know, that's true.

J Jen Myers 32:57

I think, in general, too. They also expected people to know this whole a lot of this from the original movie, which is fair, there's, there's no reason why you have to rehash everything, you know. So I think that that's also something where maybe they felt like if you're into the story, and you know, the original movie, you're going to bring all that stuff along with you.

J Jessi Chartier 33:17

Yeah, that's true. I mean, they did talk about it briefly. Right, but they didn't really go totally into it. Let's talk a little bit about the history of calling someone's name in a mirror.

J Jen Myers 33:29

All right

J Jessi Chartier 33:30

Shall we? Apparently, this started out as a divination ritual where young women would walk up the stairs flight of stairs backwards, holding a candle and a hand mirror. Apparently, if you did this in a darkened house, you could see your future husband's face. Or you would catch the face of a grim reaper

J Jen Myers 33:54

one or the other there's nothing in between

J Jessi Chartier 33:57

nothing in between. Right? And then this kind of became the the basis of things like Bloody Mary.

J Jen Myers 34:05

Interesting. I actually did not know that.

J Jessi Chartier 34:07

Jessi Chartier 34:10

Yeah, of calling them yeah. So but I love the idea of I don't know I just I love the idea of of calling something in a mirror because there's that sense of like everything's reversed your call you're looking at yourself, there are things within you or behind you having things come from the opposite world into the not opposite world, you know?

J Jen Myers 34:31

Yeah, and I do think there is an interesting thing that this film did that was essentially treated the Mirror Universe like a parallel universe because there are times when especially like, when some of the kills are happening. You will see things happening in the mirror or you always see the Candyman in the mirror when he's not there in like real life. I get for lack of better terms there but you know what I mean, like I'm thinking specifically of the one in the Art Gallery With a couple is killed there. There's things that you see happening in the mirrors that are not happening in the room. Well, they are happening, but you don't see like this. You don't see everything. You know what I mean? There's, there's like stuff going on in the mirrors. So it's almost like this parallel universe that the mirror is revealed, which is an interesting idea. And it worked out visually very well. Honestly, I kind of feel like that's another concept piled on to a lot of other things I'm thinking about in this film that I feel like it got, it got complicated for me to be like, Oh, God, are you saying that there's a parallel universe here? That's a lot to think about. But I guess I think maybe you can just take it about, like visual visual styling. It looks very cool. But But yeah, there's a whole rabbit hole underneath that, though, isn't there of like, okay, so, how powerful are these mirrors? In this area?

J Jessi Chartier 35:50

Yeah. It is. I think that there's Yeah, I guess we I mean, there's mirrors have always been seen as potentially dangerous, right? They're, you know, things get distorted at night and blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. And there's that line at the end, where Brianna says, Can I see myself in the mirror? Which of course, we all know, she's looking in the mirror so that she can call it so right. The fact that you have to see yourself, when you're calling Candyman. It's just very telling. Yes. And this was the first time that I have seen that was the very first time with Brianna calling where she was calling Candyman. And he didn't kill the person who he who called.

J Jen Myers 36:42

Yeah, that is also true.

J Jessi Chartier 36:45

Was, something's in there? Yeah.

J Jen Myers 36:48

See, that just confuses me more though. It's like, okay, so what is he doing? Like, I don't get it. It's hard to find, like consistent threads through this.

J Jessi Chartier 37:01

It very,

J Jen Myers 37:02

I did, like, I do. I do. Like, if we can mention it and pick up a thread from our mini about the original Candyman that at the very end, when Candyman is manifested. He takes on the appearance of original Canada man, Tony Todd.

J Jessi Chartier 37:20

Yes, he does, thank God,

J Jen Myers 37:22

Which is very good. And I have to admit that like I was I was, it was actually from that perspective, like, very, it's a great payoff at the end, because I was rooting for the whole movie. And I was like, I was like, towards the end, I'm like, Ah, are they gonna make him look like him? Are they gonna make him look like him? Is he gonna? Is he gonna pop up? And he did, that was very satisfying. But it is. But it is like, still, I still had trouble like, from the story perspective of understanding, like what that actually meant, like, I was really happy to see Tony Todd, but I also was like, but now I'm really confused about what was happening and why.

J Jessi Chartier 37:56

Yes, it was. It is odd. It is, there are moments where I was like, what, I think I just need to watch it again. I think it's one of those movies that I'll have to continually go back to and watch again and again and do a lot of reading on you know, like, my perspective is very limited. It's it's very one sided. And this is a movie that I'm excited to continue to return to. Yeah, if people here's one thing we didn't talk about to Jen is if people liked candy, man, what else are they going to watch?

J Jen Myers 38:24

Well, I would say that in the context of everything we're talking about, for this new movie, I would say that it seems like it you probably have already seen it. But it seems like we would be remiss if we didn't mention that producer and writer Jordan Peele's own films Get Out and Us. And I don't think we've talked about either one of those. I'd love to talk about us sometime because I'm a big fan of that film. And I think there's a lot of really cool stuff going on there.



J Jessi Chartier 38:52

I need to watch that is what I have not seen yet. I did see

J Jen Myers 38:55

I recommend it. Okay, yeah, it's I don't know that the one that would be interesting, because that's one that I really, really like. And I know people don't like it as much especially compared to get out you know, so that could be an interesting one to talk about. But yeah, you know, there's there's clearly you know, Jordan Peele did not direct this Nia da Costa directed this isn't something to be clear about because I think a lot of times this he did produce and I think helped write it, but this film got attributed to him a lot when it is actually Nia da Costa's movie. So we want to be really clear about that. But I think that he was able to bring the the power that he has had through the success with films that explore similar social issues for lack of a better phrase, I guess they're so you know, I feel like you've probably already seen those if you're into this sort of thing, but if you haven't, and like you said you hadn't seen us I highly recommend that I think that's a good place to start. I would say that I mean, we should also mention this is another no brainer, but if you've only seen the original Candyman it kind of would suck for you because we talked about a lot of spoilers, but you should definitely go see or I'm sorry, did I say I meant this Candyman if you've only seen this one, you should go see the original one.

J Jessi Chartier 40:01

Yes 100%

J Jen Myers 40:03

Those are like very like not at all original recommendations, but just to like cover our bases as the first things off the top of my head.


J Jessi Chartier 40:11

Yes, I think that I would also watch, I would go back and watch Lovecraft County, which is also very good. I've also there is a movie called black box that was also supposed to be very good. And I have not seen that one. But I've heard really good things about it.

J Jen Myers 40:27

Are there any other films that you have liked that also deal with urban legends? Because I have to say that I and I kind of mentioned this obliquely in our mini episode about the original Candyman, but I I feel like a lot of horror movies use urban legends as gimmicks and they don't really explore the you know, the meaning of the stories or the folklore or why people tell those stories. Like I mentioned, one of the things that I really like about the 92 Candyman is that it

really does dig into the role of folklore and the role of urban legends and I feel like a lot of other horror movies don't really do that digging, but I could be wrong. Do you know of anyone that like, takes on an urban legend and it's more than just a gimmick?

 Jessi Chartier 41:11

Well, Jeepers Creepers was based on urban legend, and I really liked Jeepers Creepers. And then there was okay, there was also a Mothman.

 Jen Myers 41:20

Oh, I haven't seen that one either.

 Jessi Chartier 41:21

That one was kind of okay. It was just okay. Yeah, it was alright. Jeepers Creepers was much better. Okay, I mean, we could talk about the awfulness of Slender Man.

 Jen Myers 41:32

I mean, I wouldn't mind talking about that at some point because I have strong feelings about the the the way people talk about the original case. Oh, here's here's one. I have it. I have a recommendation kind of along these lines. Cropsey? Have you seen that?

 Jessi Chartier 41:44

No, what's that one about?

 Jen Myers 41:46

So So and it's a little bit out there because it's actually this is a documentary so but it is a about it. There's a couple of filmmakers who they start to investigate, you know, one of their local urban legends, which I think they grew up on islands, or Staten Island. So this is a Cropsey is there like urban legend and so they start to dig into this. And it's actually really interesting that with I don't want to go into too many spoilers, but we'll say they, they start getting into kind of the the real life like tragedies around all of it. And it becomes kind of not so much of like a shocking thing, but like a somber thing of like, wow, real life horror is pretty, pretty much a bummer there. But it is a very, it's a good movie, and I highly recommend it. And I do think that that is a good example of like digging into the meaning of urban legends and how they affect people and how the story compare, you know, contrasts and also aligns with the reality in some cases.

 Jessi Chartier 42:42

J Jessi Chartier 42:43
Yes. Okay. That sounds really good.

J Jen Myers 42:46
So that's a good one.

J Jessi Chartier 42:47
I mean, if we're talking about just movies that deal with urban legends, there's always the *When a Stranger Calls*

J Jen Myers 42:53
I've never actually seen that. Yeah, the babysitter story.

J Jessi Chartier 42:58
It's okay. It's okay. I wouldn't say it's amazing. It is pretty good, though. It is pretty good. But I think if you're looking for something that's off beat, that is that deals, not necessarily. Not necessarily with race, but with class and the oppressive factor of class, I highly recommend. There's a Czech movie from the 70s called *The Ear*. Okay. And it's available on Criterion. And it follows. It's, it follows a couple husband and wife, they come home after a political dinner party, and he works for the ministry of like agriculture or something. And this is during Czechoslovakia. So it was still under Soviet rule. And he based you get flashbacks to what was going on at the dinner. And you basically discover that he's kind of been working against, not against the government, but doing things like I will sign this paperwork so that this area gets more food because they need it and trying to like, do better. Yeah. And he had another comrade that he was working with, who you discover upon the stairs like oh, where's I can't remember his name. Where's Gary? And they're like, Oh, you didn't hear? Oh, he's traveling. So which is of course code for we killed him. Right? And so all of a sudden you the whole movie is about how the government might actually be listening to you whether or not they might be listening to you and your conversations. And the wife is like, convinced that the government isn't listening. And so she's like, drunk and just like spewing all this stuff. And it's it creates this slow burn tension of oh my god, what is going to happen to us? Are we going to be killed? Are we going to be executed? Are they going to even come for us? Like it's just the fear of living in oppression and it was a really, really good film. So if you want to see something that kind of tackles that sense of public political oppression. I highly recommend watching *The Ear*.

J Jen Myers 45:04
Interesting. Recommended. Yeah, I've heard it recommended on other podcasts, I think but yeah, and I'd like that looking at it at that ways is interesting. So yeah, honestly, I'm thinking this whole recommendation section has made me think about like, the dearth of movies. And

not only this kind of like taking on complicated social issues, but also like digging into the real meaning of urban legends and folklore and things like that. It feels like we need a lot more of those types of movies. That's basically what I'm the conclusion I'm drawing here.

J Jessi Chartier 45:37

I think that's a great conclusion. I'm here for it. Alright, so this, I'm looking at the Wikipedia page. And it says that this movie was released in 1990. It was not it's released in 1970. Oh, but it was it was banned. So that year, just a random piece of the film was banned by the Communist Party. And so it wasn't officially released until the end of the communist regime in 1989. Got it? Yeah, that's a good one.

J Jen Myers 46:06

Yeah, overall Candyman, I think I'm with you that I, I would definitely sit down and watch this again, to see if I can make it a little bit clearer. I do feel like the film. I still, I still feel like I wish the the film had done a little bit more of that for me, not because I'm unwilling to do it. But just because I feel like they put so much into this film, I feel like it might have been a stronger film, if we had been able to streamline it a little bit. And maybe, maybe there's more subtext. I think that the like I said before, I think that the subtext and the text are kind of confused in areas where maybe they could be swapped to kind of make the the real meanings come through a little bit better. That's That's my last word on on the new one, but I am willing to keep watching it to see if I can understand it better.

J Jessi Chartier 46:56

I think that it completely agree with you. I also think that this is a movie everyone should see because it's just so damn good. And it's it's just good for us to have some really nice horror films that tackle more than just the standard grief, the standard fear, it's nice to see something that tries to tackle a pretty complex issue.

J Jen Myers 47:16

That is a really good point, especially for us. I've pretty much everything, every film we talk about is about grief. And not that this one isn't. But it's not. It's about like you said about a lot of other things going on too. It's much more complex.

J Jessi Chartier 47:28

Yes, agree. All right. Well, thanks for listening everybody. Jen, it's always a pleasure to talk to you. Absolutely. Yeah. Hey, Jen. If people want to find us where can they go?

J Jen Myers 47:38

Oh, you can find us all over the place. So you can find subscribe to us on basically all of the pod catchers out there. You can also stream episodes at our website quietlittlehorror.com or on Twitter at [quiethorror](https://twitter.com/quiethorror) and on Instagram at [quietlittlehorror](https://www.instagram.com/quietlittlehorror). And if you have any feedback or movie suggestions for the future, you can send us an email at hello@quietlittlehorror.com



Jessi Chartier 48:03

Thanks, everybody for joining us. We'll see you next time. Bye