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### THE ALIEN

For all its gory special effects, bizarre sets, and overly loud sound mixes, Alien is a routine science fiction thriller evidencing a vintage fifties fear of "the thing" coupled with a contemporary paranoiac fear of double crosses and "the company."

Performances throughout are good, though it is a little bothersome that every character seems so enamoured of Jones the cat that they throw caution to the wind and wander out alone after him and into the clutches of the Alien. Given the many twists in the plot, I thought the cat would be fingered as a partner to the Alien.

The real questions raised by Alien are those of taste and the responsibility of filmmakers. The heart of Alien is unpleasant closeups of our collective nightmares--blood, guts, grotesques, and freaks. The horrible is made super real and monstrously explicit; the film reminds one of the pea soup of The Exorcist. One wonders if this is truly palatable fare. Cheaper films like Phantasm seem only a few yards down the road from Alien.

I'd rate it A-4 because of my reservations about focussing so intently on gore and dismemberment.

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