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"X-Files" Episode on Area 51 [commentary]

From: campbell@ufomind.com (Glenn Campbell, Las Vegas)

Date: Sun, 24 Jan 1999 03:46:56 -0800

Brentley (bsmith@zippynet.com) writes:

>BTW, I'll admit that I've not gone digging through your web site, but have
>you rendered any comments on the recent X-Files episode and it's presence
>and effect or lack thereof in Rachel?

You must be referring to the two-parter about Area 51 in Nov. or Dec.

I haven't watched the "X-Files" lately, being burned out on the concept, but I did tune in to that episode because it was supposed to be about "us." I can't remember most of it now -- something about Mulder switching bodies with a government agent at Area 51 -- but I recall being disappointed. It seemed to be missing the subtlety of the original X-Files episodes. I preferred the "Deep Throat" episode in the first season which was set at a fictional "Ellens Air Force Base." In my mind, that episode completely captured the Area 51 mythology. The new episode had to make everything explicit and lost its magic in the process.

In the recent episode, Mulder and Scully are driving down Highway 375 toward Rachel when some government thugs pull them over and rough them up for no good reason. I think the show lost me at that point.

There are a couple of old episodes of the X-Files that I will always cherish, because they were small, human stories, not melodramatic conspiracies. I think it would have been sweeter if the series had ended at the top of its arc -- while it was still filmed in dark Vancouver. At present, it has nothing more to deliver and has become a sort of big-budget "Dr. Who" that just goes on and on, repeating the same formula.

I don't even love Scully anymore. I think she's a bore, now that she has all but lost her skepticism.

As for whether the recent episode had any impact in Rachel... I doubt that most people in town were even aware of it. Rachel is its own planet, almost always engaged in a civil war of some kind, and what goes in the outside world has very little effect.

On another TV note: My favorite TV show, "Fantasy Island," has been cancelled by ABC. This is the darker, more interesting version of the

1970s series, without the midget and starring the ever-sinister Malcolm McDowell as "Mr.Roarke." The new series got good reviews but poor ratings. The current episodes are its last.

Looking at it philosophically, maybe Fantasy Island is bowing out at the top of its arc, before it loses its bite. I am comfortable with its demise because I don't want be hurt again... like I was with "Twin Peaks" and the disappointing final episode of "The Prisoner."

There is a fine line between subtle and stupid, and it usually starts at about the fifth episode.

Glenn

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RELEVANCE OF THIS MESSAGE: Commentary

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Created: Jan 24, 1999