

# In Detroit, Skin Is In

Thomas Haroldson

1967

As most movie goers know, “skin is in.” Some of the current biggies in Detroit are: “Naughty Shutter”; “Naked and the Wicked”; “Nudes on Credit”; “The Erotic Mr. Rose”; “Notorious Daughter of Fanny Hill”; and last, but not least, “Fanny Hill Meets Lady Chatterley.”

The above pictures, and many more like them, have become so popular in Detroit that we now rank number three in the nation in skin houses.

While this dubious distinction doesn't say much for the mental health of our “adults only” population, it does suggest that perhaps it's about-time someone took a serious look at one of these pictures.

So I volunteered. However, the movie I finally decided to review, “Fanny Hill Meets Lady Chatterley,” was a poor choice. Quite by accident I had selected a film that is relatively too good to be truly representative.

Of course, in the skin trade a picture doesn't have to be very good (and it wasn't) to win four stars. In fact, by conventional standards it can be terrible (and it was) and still be better than anything else in town:

For example, the usual skin flick looks as though it had been photographed with surplus World War I equipment. “Fanny Hill Meets Lady Chatterley,” on the other hand, was photographed in color, and the frequently imaginative camera work is thoroughly professional.

In addition, the picture has a plot, which is more than most skin films can claim. The story holds together surprisingly well, if you don't mind seeing Lady C. appear two hundred years before she was born.

And finally, the elegant period costumes are so rich and colorful that it seems unlikely that they were designed for this picture. In fact, they might even be leftovers from a film such as “Tom Jones.” At this point, however, any connection between this movie and what might be called a legitimate picture ends.

The people appearing in the film are not professional actors, and they seem to go out of their way to prove it. I'm certain that anyone, anywhere, at any time, could give a better performance.

The sound track has the blurred tonal quality of a dime store tape recorder played through an Edison gramophone. The audio quality in general is so poor that much of the dialog is completely unintelligible.

But, people who go to see skin flicks are not very concerned about tonal quality and dialog. They want to see skin—and lots of it! On this point, at least, the picture delivers the goodies.

Fanny (like her counterpart Annie Fanny) has great difficulty keeping her clothes on. And no effort is made to conceal, or to coyly present, the young lady's charms. For a good part of the picture she parades around partially nude, displaying all the grace of an artist's model during a cigarette break.

The sex scenes, by necessity, are handled with a bit more finesse, but not much. Fanny, who is first seduced by a stable boy, and then by Lady C., sometimes hesitates a full two seconds before leaping into bed.

The grand finale of the picture is, of course, a spectacular orgy. As the topless and bottomless participants cavort about, Fanny groans and says, “I think these people are oversexed.” A memorable line, to be sure.

I'm not certain I learned anything new about movies by going to see this picture, but at least it did lead me to one conclusion. I am now convinced that such pictures are truly “for adults only.” At least I hope so.

I would hate to think that any non-adult would feel the need for the jaded sexual titillation which these films offer.

For, after all, the adult world of skin flicks is a part of the adult world of sexual failure. It is a world you buy your way into after all else has failed. It's a loser's world, and a pretty damn sad one at that.

# fifth Estate

Thomas Haroldson  
In Detroit, Skin Is In  
1967

<https://www.fiftheestate.org/archive/42-november-15-30-1967/in-detroit-skin-is-in>  
Fifth Estate #42, November 15-30, 1967

**[fiftheestate.anarchistlibraries.net](https://www.fiftheestate.org)**