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A Hotel Room With Views of 5 Couples' Relationships

By JEANNETTE CATSOULIS Published: January 31, 2007

“Room 314” cracks open the door of an anonymous hotel room where, at different times, five couples navigate critical moments in their relationships. But whether dealing with unrequited love, suicidal depression or what appears to be a booty call gone awry, no one is permitted to check out without a dose of self-knowledge. You certainly don't get that at a Holiday Inn.

Written and directed by Michael Knowles (who is also the cinematographer), “Room 314” is an actor's dream. Shot in self-contained episodes and entirely without music (except for the credits), it has a *vérité* look and a voyeuristic atmosphere that complement the intimacy of the material.

As you might expect in a movie about a hotel room, alcohol and sex feature prominently, though mainly as a cover for deeper issues. This is handled most insightfully in a segment in which a pair of co-workers (Robyn Myhr and the versatile Mr. Knowles) flirt with adultery while fending off self-loathing — though I doubt that many would-be philanderers face each other with this degree of emotional honesty.

Like most films of this type, “Room 314” demands a great deal from its performers, not all of whom withstand the intense scrutiny. Fortunately, the action is bookended by four of the best: Matthew Del Negro and Joelle Carter as a couple who drunkenly connect at a bachelor party, and Michael Mosley and Jennifer Marlowe as friends with benefits and an unresolved past. In this hotel room unresolved pasts are as common as the continental breakfast.