



Tracking Shots

'Room 314'

by Ed Gonzalez

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How many stories can one hotel room tell? At least five according to Room 314, a pageant of white heterosexual encounters of the inconsequential kind. Nick and Stacey, refugees from a bachelor party who discover how to curb the embarrassment of a one-night stand; Harry, a recovering alcoholic bound for suicide; Jack and Kathy, married to other people and incapable of deciding whether to have sex; Matt and Tracy, all fun and games until he calls her a whore; and David and Caly, cute young things who have no business sharing a room now that they're broken up. Writer-director Michael Knowles is interested in what happens when you shove people into the anonymous space of a hotel room, but these mostly unconnected short cuts are neither unusual nor substantial, bringing to mind memories of better productions that also panned out inside the confines of rented locales: Robert Altman's Fool for Love, where there was a sense of how interiors are colored by the world outside (it would appear that Room 314 is where cinema goes to die), or Richard Linklater's fiercely wound-up Tape, which found more than one angle from which to shoot the discord of its characters and whose lissome, lightning-rod dialogue didn't sound as if it existed only to buy time until the next scene.