

MOVIE

RECOMMENDATION

Soylent Green

Soylent Green (1973), directed by Richard Fleischer and starring Charlton Heston, is a dystopian science-fiction film set in a grim future where overpopulation, climate disaster, and resource scarcity have pushed humanity to the brink. The movie explores themes of environmental collapse, social inequality, and government secrecy, making it one of the earliest cinematic warnings about unsustainable human development. Though released more than five decades ago, its message feels increasingly relevant in today's world of ecological uncertainty.

PLOT SYNOPSIS

The film is set in New York City in the year 2022, where the population has exploded to over 40 million people. The city is choked with pollution, extreme heat, and severe food shortages. Natural foods like vegetables and meat have become unaffordable luxuries for the elite, while the masses survive on synthetic food rations created by the powerful Soylent Corporation. Their latest product, Soylent Green, is advertised as a nutrient-rich wafer made from ocean plankton.

Detective Robert Thorn (Charlton Heston) lives in poverty with his elderly companion, Solomon Roth (Edward G. Robinson), a former scholar. Thorn is assigned to investigate the murder of William Simonson, a wealthy and influential businessman connected to the Soylent Corporation. As Thorn probes deeper, he discovers inconsistencies in the crime scene that suggest a cover-up. Meanwhile, Roth conducts research and uncovers disturbing truths about the world's collapsing ecosystem and the government's complicity.

Thorn's investigation reveals that Simonson was killed because he knew a horrific secret: due to the extinction of ocean plankton, the corporation has been producing Soylent Green using human bodies harvested from the dead victims of poverty, euthanasia centers, and state-sanctioned disposal.

As the truth becomes clear, Roth, overwhelmed with despair, voluntarily checks into a government-run euthanasia facility. Before dying, he shares his discovery with Thorn, urging him to expose the truth. Thorn witnesses the facility's operations and realizes that the dead are transported to factories where they are turned into food.

In the film's tense climax, Thorn is wounded while confronting corporate forces but manages to utter the iconic warning "Soylent Green is people!" before being taken away for medical treatment. Whether the truth will ever reach the public remains uncertain.

