

## Paper Cuts: Wild Posters #4—“THE BEES”

Written by Tal Zimerman

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### THE BEES

1978, U.S./Mexico

Portion of North American exhibitors' manual

A theme common to many films of the “nature gone awry” subgenre is that of humans bringing it on ourselves. The twisted morality of needing to assert our dominance over the animal and plant kingdoms, weather systems and our own physiology is often directly answered by whatever it is that we have been abusing. We abuse the soil, and the corncocks uproot and bring about our self-made demise. We abuse the water, and the dead rise from a nearby reservoir. We abuse our pets and livestock, and they grow 10 times their natural size and eat us for lunch. The message is simple: Mess with nature, and it will mess with you, big time.

Funny, then, that the exhibitor manual for THE BEES (a 1978 New World ripoff of THE SWARM starring John Saxon, Angel Tompkins and John Carradine) should advocate just the opposite. What's an exhibitor manual, you ask? It's part of a package that the studios send to theaters ahead of release dates. Certain contents can be found under the “ACCESSORIES” heading. It's what's under the “PROMOTION” heading that worries me; just give it a read, and tell me what you think is wrong with this picture.

<b>PROMOTION</b> Dress your uninitiated salesmen and waitresses in zany bee outfits (a la John Belushi of Saturday Night Live) at least two weeks prior to your playdate. Curious patrons are certain to inquire as to the meaning of all this, to which your people will mysteriously reply: “The Bees are Coming.” (Hint: Pay your employees a few extra bucks for enduring the humiliation of the costumes.) Stage a beauty contest where the audience is invited to pick the local “honey.” Hold it during intermission one week prior to your premier of “The Bees” and tabulate the votes in time for your opening. That evening, during intermission, announce the winner during a gala ceremony. Be sure to publicize the event through the local media. Arrange a public lecture or radio interview with a local university entomologist; have him speak to the “clear and present danger” that the African Killer Bee presents to this nation. Have the press cover the event and make sure the entomologist tells “The Bees” into his speech. Tie-in with a local distributor of honey or honey candy	<small>bars. Get them to mention “The Bees” in all their ads. To heighten the realism of this terrifying movie, release a few harmless “TV Bees” into your theatre during the screen scenes. (Please note New World will assume no responsibility for any damages or legal fees resulting from this tip . . . )</small> <b>ACCESSORIES</b> Available from New World Two 30 second radio spots guaranteed to send audiences buzzing to your boxoffice! TV spot: 30 seconds of spectacular action and stinging terror. Available from National Screen Color 1-sheets BL & WT theatrical stillsets (8 to a set). A Theatrical Trailer a terrifying little gem that gives impact to the coming horror of “THE BEES”
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Look out for other, less lawsuit-inducing non-poster promotional materials in the future.

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