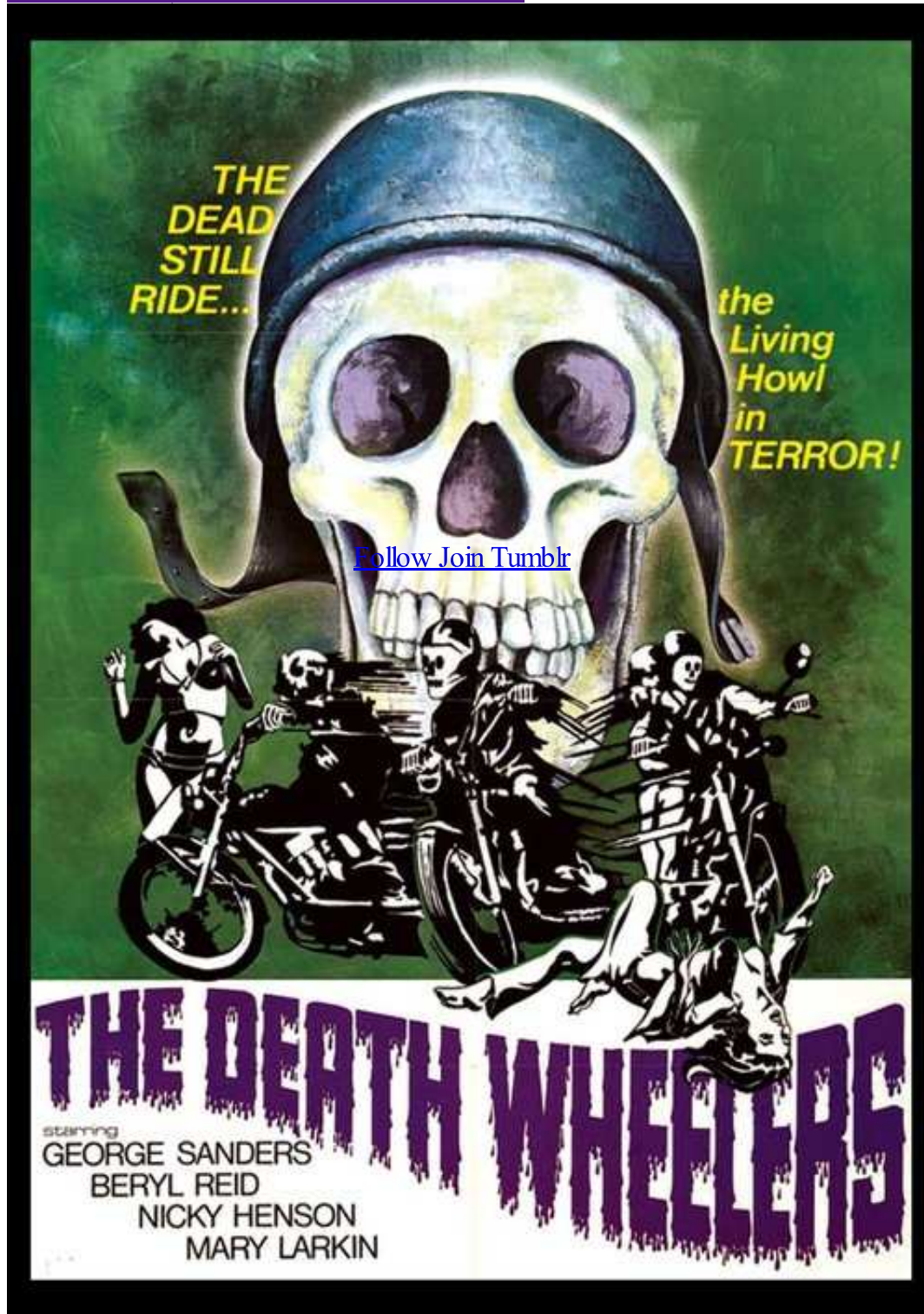


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From the early 70s U.K. comes THE DEATH WHEELERS (a retitling of Norman J. Warrens' "Psychomania" and it is PSYCHOdolic)! That being said, here is my (drumroll)

QUANTITATIVE/QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS
OF

THE DEATH WHEELERS

GENRE ELEMENTS: Outlaw bikers, zombies, black magic, police procedural, vehicle chase action, black comedy, creepy witch mom.

EXECUTION: Mondo atmospheric, oodles of mood, some of the same creepiness as “The Dunwich Horror”, very trippy, psychedelic music, ephemeral visuals, surrealist tangents (such as a wild and symbolic death-dream sequence), subtlety, low-key conveyance of psychological horror through occult storyline, storytelling through visual symbolism and not just exposition, set design, thoughtfulness.

SUBTEXT/PHILOSOPHY: Challenges conventional mundane paradigms, anarchist bent, ego, faith seen through a dark lense, acceptance of mortality over against fear of death and desire for immortality (juxtaposed with one of PSYCHOMANIA’s scariest elements, the prison and problem of immortality), the mother-son relationship.

FINAL ANALYSIS: This one-of-a-kind zombie biker movie manages to juggle a lot of psycho-subtextual ideas beneath the surface of a film whose tenebrous ambience, aided greatly by a stellar score, is the compelling center line. Said atmosphere is contributed to by the aforementioned music, the striking visuals, the stylized mucho-70s set designs, a keen eye for color use and composition and so forth. There is also creativity to go around, not just in all the above unique aspects of the PSYCHOMANIA, but also in terms of how the bikers choose to end their lives in their pact with darkness to attain immortality. This points to some of the quirkiest aspects of the film. The Living Dead (the biker gang’s name, even before actual living dead status) is no doubt a batch of sociopaths, but their idea of rebellion consists as much of annoying the police, fucking with people and generally making public nuisances of themselves. Of course, once immortality is achieved, things start to take a turn toward the violent. At this point, mom starts to wonder if maybe letting her son take the left-hand path was such a good idea. At any rate, PSYCHOMANIA is a blast, the vintage cinematic equivalent of stoner rock.

85 min., full screen 1.33:1, color, 1973

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[May 11, 2013 \(1:23 pm\)](#)

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