

Review #31 : *Let's Make It Legal* (1951)

Claudette Colbert and Zachary Scott

TRAILER

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WUj-usJDmPE>

It is a brisk romantic triangle comedy. A middle-aged couple – Claudette Colbert and Mac Carey – are on the verge of divorce because of his gambling problem when a beau from high-school days (Zachary Scott), who since became a nationally prominent industrialist, shows up to woo Claudette, at which point Mac redoubles his efforts to win her back...



The playing tone is delightfully bright and the players give their all. Although Colbert plays a premature grandmother, she is as warm and witty as ever. Zachary Scott (whom most moviegoers are more likely to remember as the decadent aristocrat Monte Beragon in 1945's *Mildred Pierce*) is a delightful study in narcissism : watch how the camera catches his unctuous face and bright lying eyes as he goes after his high-school sweetheart from over 20 years ago. Barbara Bates and Robert Wagner play the divorcing couple's daughter and son-in-

law who still live with the folks with their new baby, and fall into a war of nerves : she wants her folks to get back together while he is cheering for Scott's character.



And Marilyn Monroe ? She was still only partway through her build-up phase, between her brief comic turn in *All About Eve* (1950) and the full-blown star of *Gentlemen prefer Blondes* (1953). Her role here is quite brief, probably no more than ten minutes' playing time spread over several scenes. Her character's most significant action is being forced to dance with Zachary Scott, who promptly rejects her in favour of Claudette Colbert – probably the last time in any movie that Marilyn did not dazzle any male in her path ! +++

