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Title: What About Pedro?

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1/25/2010—I saw Nancy Meyers' film, *It's Complicated*, on Saturday night. I admit I liked it. It was only after I thought about the movie that I hated it. The movie is evil. In the film, Meryl Streep has an affair with her ex, Alec Baldwin, who had left her 10 years before for a much younger woman. That resulting marriage is not working out. Baldwin and his wife have a 5-year old, Pedro, and she wants a baby. The affair between Streep and Baldwin will cause the end of his marriage. How is this a comedy? Meyers works hard to keep us from considering that Streep is aiding Baldwin in breaking up a second marriage that will harm Pedro as much as the earlier divorce harmed the three children she and Baldwin reared. No one has sympathy for Pedro because he is sort of hyper active and, in a weird contrivance, he is not Baldwin's biological child. The new wife apparently broke up Streep's marriage and then went off with another man, got pregnant, and then returned to Baldwin, who in a fit of nobility took her back. All this is supposed to show us that the woman is strange. All it really does is prove how much Pedro needs a father. The reason a basically decent woman like Streep's character does not have to think about the effect of her actions on Pedro is that the movie is secular in the worse sense. Streep knows that the affair is wrong, but her moral sense is temporarily deranged. If she had gone to a rabbi or minister, as Woody Allen would have, she would have been told to think of Pedro. Instead, she goes to see a therapist and is told to seek self-discovery, which is the highest goal of a certain form of secularism. This is why I hate the popular forms of secularism and think we need to keep in contact with our religious traditions, despite their negative aspects. At least they maintain the necessity of taking ourselves seriously in a moral sense.