

A Regulation Hottie

High school spy

MEAN GIRLS: Directed by Mark S. Waters. Written by Tina Fey, based on the book, *Queen Bees and Wannabees* by Rosalind Wiseman. Produced by Lorne Michael. Executive producer, Jill Sobel Messick. Cinematography, Daryn Okada. Editor, wend Greene Bricmont. Production design, Cary White. Costumes, Mary Jane Fort. Starring Lindsay Lohan, Rachel McAdams, Tina Fey, Lizzy Caplan, Daniel Franzese and Jonathan Bennett. With Lacey Chabert, Amanda Seyfried, Tim Meadows. Paramount Pictures, 2004. PG-13. 93 minutes.

Too soon, director Mark S. Waters and “Saturday Night Live” head writer Tina Fey’s *Mean Girls* turns mean, but before that suburban Chicago high-school student Cady (Lindsay Lohan) shows us how hard it is to be the new girl in school. She makes friends with Janis Ian (Lizzy Caplan), a Goth girl, and Damian (Daniel Franzese), a gay guy. They warn her about the Plastics, three vindictive girls hostile to all other girls, especially those who don’t follow the squad’s erratic rules regarding dress and behavior.

But Cady falls under the spell of queen

bee Regina George (Rachel McAdams) and spends lots of time with Regina and her devotees, Gretchen Wieners (Lacey Chabert) and Karen Smith (Amanda Seyfried). And before she learns about the “feminist” rule that nixes attraction to former boyfriends of the Plastics, Cady likes Aaron (Jonathan Bennett). Regina’s old flame. So while Janis and Damian encourage Cady to spy on the Plastics, before long she’s become a mean girl, too.

That’s about as deep as the story gets, although Cady’s math teacher, Ms. Norbury (Tina Fey in a solid performance), attempts to interest the student in joining the math club’s competition team. By the time girlfights spill out into the hall and threaten to turn riotous, high school Principal Duvall (Tim Meadows) with great comic restraint calls in the fire department to cool things off.

Compared to *13 Going on 30*, which I reviewed last week and liked much better,



Aaron (Jonathan Bennett) and Cady (Lindsay Lohan) in math class.

PARAMOUNT PICTURES, 2004.

Mean Girls is not as engaging, despite some comic moments in Tina Fey’s script. In *13*, when Jenna (Jennifer Garner) discovers she has become a mean girl herself, she figures out her so-called best friend, Lucy (Jane Greer), is as cut-throat a competitor in the business world as she was in high school. But in *Mean Girls*, when Cady gets caught by school authorities for serious character slandering, she publicly renounces her bad ways, which should

make her humble. But Cady tacks on what right-wingers label the media liberals they hate — a “politically correct” attitude. The scene feels phony to me. Cady did not show us these generous feelings before, and they feel false, coming at a time to make her a heroine. Boo.

Now playing at Cinemark and Cinema World, *Mean Girls* jumps the tracks but lays down a few choice scenes first. Largely enjoyable. **EW**

movie clips

OPENING OR RETURNING:

All About My Mother (1999): Pedro Almodóvar’s multi-layered drama looks at women, friendship, death and forgiveness through a strong single mother’s odyssey to the past on behalf of her dead son. Outstanding performances. One of Almodóvar’s wittiest scripts. R. At 7 pm on 5/12 in 180 PLC, UO campus. Free.

Beyond the Movie: Capturing Troy: Through ancient storytelling and modern archaeology explore the truth behind the legend. At 9 pm on 5/7 on the National Geographic Channel.

Bon Voyage: Jean-Paul Rappeneau directs great ensemble cast including Isabelle Adjani, Gerard Depardieu, Viginie Ledoyen and Gregori Derangere in satire set on the eve of WWII. Highly recommended. PG-13. Bijou. **See review this issue.**

Broadway Danny Rose (1984): Woody Allen’s excellent comedy about a lovable talent agent and a client who turns unfaithfulness into an art. Stars Allen, Mia Farrow, Milton Berle, Howard Cossell. PG. At 7 pm on 5/12 in 30 Pacific Hall, UO campus. Free.

Connie and Carla: Nia Vardalos and Toni Collette observe a Mafia hit, head for LA and become drag queens until Connie meets Jeff (David Duchovny). PG-13. Movies 12.

Girl Next Door, The: Emile Hirsch and Elisha Cuthbert (“24”) star in Luke Greenfield’s teen comedy, romance. R. Movies 12.

I Dream of Mimi: Japanese erotic anime about an ultra high performance computer in the form of a gorgeous, naked woman who does anything you want. LateNite Bijou, May 7-9.

Kids Are All Right, The: The Who documentary celebrates legendary performances and chronicle the band members’ development from angry mods (1967 TV debut on the Smothers Brother show) to rock icons in the 1970s. NR. LateNite Bijou.

Mastermind of His Time, History of Michael Kay: Local hip hop artist Michael Kay. Plays at 1 pm on May 8 at the Bijou. \$6.50, 18 and older. \$5, 17 and under.

Natural Timber Country and The Whale: Documentary logging footage from early 1900s, ‘30s and ‘70s, with 10-min doc. of blown-up beached whale. At 7 pm on 5/12 in 100 Willamette, UO campus. Free.

New York Minute: Action comedy stars Mary-Kate Olsen and Ashley Olsen as sisters on the loose in Manhattan. With Eugene Levy as a loony truant officer. PG. Cinema World. Cinemark.

Raising Helen: Romantic comedy from director Garry Marshall stars Kate Hudson, John Corbett and Joan Cusack. Kate tries to raise her dead sister’s three children. PG-13. Sneak at 2 pm on 5/9. Cinemark.

Taking Lives: All-star cast includes Angelina Jolie, Ethan Hawke, Keifer Sutherland, Olivier Martinez and Jean-Hughes Anglade. Directed by D.J. Caruso. Thriller about a serial killer who steals his

victims’ identities. R. Movies 12.

Van Helsing: Monster killer Van Helsing (Hugh Jackman) teams up with Kate Beckinsale in Transylvania to bring down Count Dracula (Richard Roxburgh). PG-13. Cinemark. Cinema World.

War Began the Next Day (1987): Yuri Kara’s poetic film about a young boy’s struggles on the eve of war. At 8:45 on 5/11 in 115 Pacific Hall, UO campus. In Russian with English subtitles. Free

Films open the Friday following EW publication date unless otherwise noted. See archived reviews at www.eugeneweekly.com

CONTINUING:

Big Fish: Tim Burton’s film about a son (Billy Crudup) who tries to figure out his father’s (Albert Finney) life through the wild stories he’s told. Ewan McGregor, Helena Bonham Carter, Danny DeVito, Jessica Lange, Alison Lohman and Steve Buscemi co-star. Truly wonderful film; highest recommendations. Academy Award nom for original score. PG-13. Movies 12. **Online archives.**

Bobby Jones: Stroke of Genius: Jim Caviezel stars as golf hero who retired at age 28. Directed by Rowdy Herrington, pic also stars Malcolm McDowell, Claire Forlani, Jeremy Northam and Aidan Quinn. “His passion made him a legend.” PG. Cinemark.

Cheaper by the Dozen: Steve Martin and Bonnie Hunt play the parents of 12 children, including Piper Perabo, Hilary Duff and Tom Welling. Directed by Shawn Levy. PG. Movies 12.

Confessions of a Teenage Drama Queen: Stars Lindsay Lohan (*Freaky Friday*). Welsh director Sara Sugarman’s first movie. PG. Movies 12.

Dawn of the Dead: Remake of George Romero’s 1978 cult classic about a shopping mall taken over by those trying to survive a zombie plague. Unlikely stars: the excellent Sarah Polley (*My Life Without Me*) and Ving Rhames. R. Movies 12.

Ella Enchanted: Anne Hathaway is a perfectly obedient girl. She does what she’s told, literally. Based on Newberry-winning novel. PG. Cinemark.

Envy: Ben Stiller, Jack Black star in Barry Levinson’s film about kooky inventor (Black), who suddenly becomes wealthy from a spray that makes dog poop disappear. Neighbor (Stiller) grows murderously envious. Christopher Walken co-stars. PG-13. Cinemark.

Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind: Highly acclaimed film directed by Michel Gondry from screenplay by Charlie Kaufman (*Adaptation*). Stars Jim Carrey, Kate Winslet, Tom Wilkinson, with Mark Ruffalo, Elijah Wood, Kirsten Dunst. Carrey discovers Winslet had memories of their relationship erased. Now he wants to do the same. Or does he? The best new film of ‘04. Very highest recommendations. R. Cinema World. **Online archives.**

Eurotrip: Teens from USA invade Europe. Crass commercialism. R. Movies 12.

Godsend: Experimental cloning thriller stars Robert De Niro, Greg Kinnear and Rebecca Romijn-Stamos; directed by Nick Hamm. PG-13. Cinemark.

Good Bye, Lenin: Complicated but sweet movie about the confusions and convulsions experienced when the Berlin Wall came down, as seen through the lives of an East German family. Recommend. Bijou. **Online archives.**

Hellboy: Based on Mike Mignola’s Dark Horse Comics series, this supernatural action adventure stars Ron Perlman, John Hut, Selma Blain and Doug Jones and is directed by Guillermo del Toro. Highly entertaining, sweet film. Don’t be afraid; see it. PG-13. Cinemark. **Online archives.**

Home on the Range: Disney animated feature features voices by Roseanne Barr, Judi Dench, Jennifer Tilly, Cuba Gooding Jr., Randy Quaid, Steve Buscemi, Carole Cook and Governor Ann Richards., while singing comes from k.d. lang, Bonnie Raitt, Tim McGraw and The Beau Sisters. PG. Cinemark.

Kill Bill Vol. 1: Quentin Tarantino’s first of two films was called the most violent film ever made in Hollywood. Stars Uma Thurman as the Bride, a woman with a mission: Kill Bill (David Carradine), her former boss and lover who betrayed her and murdered her family. With Lucy Liu, Daryl Hannah, LaTanya Richardson, Vivica A. Fox, Michael Madsen and Samuel L. Jackson. R. Movies 12.

Kill Bill Vol. 2: The Bride (Uma Thurman) pursues her next foes, Budd (Michael Madsen), Ellie Driver (Daryl Hannah) and finally, Bill (David Carradine). Bound to be bloody. R. Cinemark. Cinema World. **Online archives.**

Laws of Attraction: Julianne Moore and Pierce Brosnan play high-strung New York divorce attorneys who square off with their famous clients (Parker Posey and Michael Sheen) during a nasty divorce, and fall in love. PG-13. Cinema World. Cinemark.

Lord of the Rings: Return of the King: Peter Jackson’s stunning work stars Elijah Wood, Viggo Mortensen, Sean Astin, Ian McKellen, Billy Boyd, Orlando Bloom, Liv Tyler, Cate Blanchett. Frodo and Sam make it to Mount Doom as Aragorn leads the warriors of Middle Earth in the final battle against Sauron. Swept 2003 Academy Awards. Very highest recommendations. Movies 12. **Online archives.**

Man on Fire: Denzel Washington as a security guard for a child who is kidnapped on his watch. He will have revenge. R. Cinema World. Cinemark.

Mean Girls: Lindsay Lohan plays a high-school student raised by zoologist parents in the African bush, who falls for a popular girl’s ex-boyfriend. PG-13. Cinemark. Cinema World. **See review this issue.**

Mystic River: Clint Eastwood directs Brian Helgeland’s adaptation, based on Dennis Lehane’s dramatic tragedy. Stars Sean Penn, Tim Robbins, Kevin Bacon, Laurence Fishburne, Marcia Gay Harden, Laura Linney and Emmy Rossum. Very

highest recommendations. 2003 Academy Awards for Penn and Robbins; nominations for picture, supporting actress Marcia Gay Harden; director Eastwood; adapted screenplay, Helgeland. R. Online archives. Movies 12. **Online archives.**

Passion of Christ, The (2004): Mel Gibson film opens amid charges (denied) of anti-Semitism. A.O. Scott of *The New York Times* writes, “The Passion of the Christ” is so relentlessly focused on the savagery of Jesus’ final hours that this film seems to arise less from love than from wrath, and to succeed more in assaulting the spirit than in uplifting it.” Others call the graphic torture unwatchable. R. Cinemark.

Punisher: Marvel comic book character Charles Bronson (Thomas Jane) pursues with a vengeance after his family is murdered. Also stars John Travolta and

Laura Harring. R. Cinemark.

Scoby Doo 2 Monsters Unleashed: Some scary action, rude humor and language. PG. Cinemark.

Secret Window: Psychotic (John Turturro) stalks writer (Johnny Depp), accusing him of stealing the ending to his story. David Koepp directs, story by Stephen King. Also stars Maria Bello, timothy Hutton, Charles S. Dutton. PG-13. Movies 12.

Thirteen Going On 30: Jennifer Garner goes to bed 13, wishing she were older. Wakes up 17 years later, and she is. Directed by Gary Winnick, also stars the always excellent Mark Ruffalo, Andy Serkis and Kathy Baker. PG-13. Cinemark. Cinema World. **See review this issue.**

Walking Tall: Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson returns home after military career to find his hometown overrun with crime, drugs and violence. He’s elected

sheriff to shut down his former rival’s criminal biz. Directed by Kevin Bray. PG-13. Movies 12.

What the Bleep Do We Know?: Through interviews with cutting-edge scientists and spiritual teachers, a brand new way of thinking about consciousness, intentionality and the ability to make a difference in the world emerges. But it begins with Amanda (Marlee Matlin). Highly recommended. NR. Bijou. **Online archives.**

You Got Served: In competitive street dancing, crews battle each other for money and respect. Cast includes Marques Houston, Omarion, Raz B, J Boog and Lil’ Fizz. PG-13. Movies 12.

**Bijou Art Cinemas (686-2458)
Cinema World 8 (342-6536)
Cinemark 17 (746-5202)ic
Movies 12 (741-1231)**

VIDEO CLIPS

NEW RELEASES ON VIDEO

Releases subject to change. Available the Tuesday following date of EW publication, sometimes sooner. See archived movie reviews at www.eugeneweekly.com

Big Fish: Tim Burton’s film about a son (Billy Crudup) who tries to figure out his father’s (Albert Finney) life through the wild stories he’s told. Also stars Ewan McGregor, Helena Bonham Carter, Danny DeVito, Jessica Lange, Alison Lohman and Steve Buscemi. Truly wonderful film; highest recommendations. Academy Award nom for original score. PG-13. **Online archives.**

Calendar Girls: Spunky members of a woman’s club in Yorkshire, England poses naked to raise money for medical research after one’s husband gets leukemia. Stars Helen Mirren, Julie Walters and John Alderton. Based on a true story. Nigel Cole directs. PG-13. Movies 12. **Online archives.**

Cooler, The: William H. Macy, Maria Bello and Alec Baldwin star in this Vegas-set romance thriller directed by Wane Kramer. Sex and violence, a few sweet moments. 2003 Academy Award nom, Supporting Actor, Alex Baldwin. R. **Online archives.**

Elephant: Gus Van Sant directs a cast of non-professional actors, high-school students from the Portland area. Film has no narrative structure, no voiceover. Camera follows students on an ordinary school day until two boys unleash mayhem and murder. Van Sant’s respect for his young actors and director’s refusal to explain why school shootings happen make it exceptional. R. **Online Archives.**

Fog of War: 2003 Academy Award-winning documentary feature directed by Errol Morris, who said, “Forty years ago, this country went down a rabbit hole in Vietnam. Millions died. I fear we’re going down the rabbit hole once again.” About Robert McNamara, defense secretary under Kennedy and Johnson; architect of the Vietnam War. Highest recommendations. PG-13. **Online archives.**

Girl With the Pearl Earring: Scarlett Johansson and Colin Firth give consummate performances in this underrated, lovely film about Vermeer and the model for his famous, mysterious painting. Very highest recommendations. 2003 Academy Award noms for cinematography, art direction, costume design. PG-13. **Online archives.**

Ghosts of the Abyss: James Cameron continues to explore the wreck of the Titanic in what *The New York Times* calls this “haunting and beautiful” 60-minute, 3-D documentary. “It is perhaps the greatest ‘old dark house’ set of all time, a haunted mansion at the bottom of the sea.”

In America: Jim Sheridan’s memoir of living in New York in 1981 with his wife and two daughters is a heartfelt film that stars Samantha Morton, Paddy Considine, Sarah Bolger and Emma Bolger. Very highest recommendations. Academy Award noms: Best Actress, Samantha Morton; Supporting Actor, Djimon Hounsou; Original screenplay, Jim, Naomi and Kirsten Sheridan. PG-13. **Online archives.**

Japanese Story: Toni Collette plays a geologist who takes a Japanese client on a trip in the Australian outback that turns bad. They do not like each other, but the demands of the trip require cooperation. *The Village Voice* says: “Totally convincing in a physically demanding role, Collette carries the movie on her shoulders—and that weight is what it’s all about.”

Last Samurai, The: Edward Zwick directs this action-adventure starring Tom Cruise as a bitter Civil War vet in China to train emperor’s troops to defeat samurais. Captured by warrior Katsumoto (Ken Watanabe), he learns Samurai traditions and code of honor. 2003 Academy Award noms: Watanabe, Supporting Actor; art direction; sound mixing; costume design. R. Movies 12. **Online archives.**

Love Actually: Written and directed by Richard Curtis (*Bridget Jones’s Diary*), this romantic comedy stars Hugh Grant, Liam Neeson, Colin Firth, Laura Linney, Alan Rickman, Emma Thompson, Keira Knightley, Martine McCutcheon, Bill Nighy. Good fun. Highly recommended. R. **Online archives.**

Osama: Written and directed by Siddiq Barmak, this greatly admired, tragic Afghani film never played Eugene. It’s the story of a 12-year old girl, Osama (Marina Golbahari) forced by necessity to dress as a boy while in a Taliban school. She is afraid her developing body will give her away, and it does. *The New York Times* says: “...beautiful, thoughtful and almost unbearably sad.”

Triplets of Belleville: Sylvain Chomet’s animated tale features the writer, director’s whimsical, skewed architecture looming over the bizarre figures, who populate his strange and wonderful story. A don’t-miss gem from 2003, the film’s Academy Award noms include Best Animated Film and original song. Very highest recommendations PG-13. **Online archives.**

Next week: Angel Heart, Enter the Dragon (1973), The Good, Bad and Ugly (1966), The Miracle, Paycheck, Torque.