



Watch This Film

A hard, necessary look at torture

TAXI TO THE DARK SIDE: Written, directed, produced and narrated by Alex Gibney. THINKFilm, 2008. R. 106 minutes. ★★★★★

When *Taxi to the Dark Side* won this year's Best Documentary Feature Oscar, it was a surprise to fans of *No End in Sight*, a brilliant documentary about the missteps made in the invasion of Iraq. But like the previous year's Best Foreign Language Film surprise — when *The Lives of Others* beat the popular *Pan's Labyrinth* — the award was given to the correct film. *Taxi to the Dark Side* is a stunning investigation into the abuse of prisoners in U.S. prisons in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere and a detailed argument against the use of torture that, though the filmmaker's position is clear, carefully allows proponents of the U.S.'s actions their say. It uses as a stepping-off point the death of a taxi driver named Dilawar in a prison at Bagram Air Force Base in Afghanistan. From Bagram, the film moves to Abu Ghraib and eventually to Guantanamo, tracing the use of vicious interrogation tactics and looking at the combination of ambiguity and pressure from above that led to their use in the first place.

One of the most difficult things about watching *Taxi* is the frequent lack of surprise. There is horror, and plenty of it,

but by now, we've come to expect that things are going to go the way they go, that superiors aren't going to be punished for what they've implicitly or explicitly told their soldiers to do; that there will be no written trail to follow back to the higher-ups; that there will be denials and evasions. What is surprising and engrossing is the depth and breadth of Alex Gibney's (*Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room*) interviews and investigations. This is a dense film, one where I kept catching myself trying to remember everything, as if I could tuck it all into one review — the comments from the soldiers who interrogated Dilawar (without nearly enough training and sometimes reluctantly) and those who inflicted terrible bruises on his legs; the story of the British man who was held for nearly three years without charges; the astonished remarks of lawyers about the absurdity of the system they were trying to fight; the insistent statements of those who believe that the men the U.S. has in custody are truly the bad guys. Watching *Taxi to the Dark Side* is exhausting; watching it is necessary. Carefully structured, beautifully presented, the film examines what has happened, how it was allowed and encouraged to happen and, in the end, what little — if any — good it does. **EW**

Taxi to the Dark Side opens Friday, April 11, at the Bijou.

Good Cast, Wasted

MARRIED LIFE: Directed by Ira Sachs. Written by Sachs and Oren Moverman. Based on Five Roundabouts to Heaven by John Bingham. Starring Pierce Brosnan, Chris Cooper, Patricia Clarkson and Rachel McAdams. Sony Pictures Classics, 2008. PG13. 90 minutes. ★★☆☆☆

This pretty but bland film rests solely on the shoulders of its stars, who stride through this late-'40s-set semi-funny melodrama gamely enough but can't bring to life the sliver of a script, which hinges entirely on the notion that you can't — gasp! — know exactly what goes on in the head of the person you share a bed with. Harry (Chris Cooper) is sure that a divorce would destroy his wife Pat (Patricia Clarkson), but he's in love with his young mistress, Kay (Rachel McAdams). He introduces Kay to his bachelor friend Richard (Pierce Brosnan, suave as ever), which later must seem like a really bad idea — almost as bad as Harry's idea to kill Pat to spare her the agony of a divorce. What catches your attention in this film is not the machinations of Harry and Richard, both in pursuit of the same young woman, or any affection for the thin characters, but the details: McAdams' vampy red lipstick and platinum hair, with all its associations; the interesting lack of children; hey, that's Faramir from *The Lord of the Rings*! It's hard, looking at the period dress, the furniture, the gorgeous old cars, not to think of Todd Haynes' *Far From Heaven*, and the comparison doesn't do *Married Life* any favors. — Molly Templeton



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TAXI TO THE DARK SIDE
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LEATHERHEADS PG13
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THE RUINS R
12:55, 3:55, 7:10, 10:10

NIM'S ISLAND PG
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1:05, 4:05, 7:05, 10:05

SUPERHERO MOVIE PG13
12:40, 3:05, 5:25, 7:50, 10:10

DRILLBIT TAYLOR PG13
1:55, 4:35, 7:15, 10:00

SHUTTER PG13
9:25 PM

HORTON HEARS A WHO G
12:05, 1:20, 2:20, 4:25, 5:30, 7:00, 7:55, 10:15

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[12:10] 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:35

NATIONAL TREASURE: THE BOOK OF SECRETS PG
[11:50, 12:45], 2:45, 4:45, 6:55, 7:40, 9:55, 10:35

PENELOPE PG
[12:15] 2:35, 4:55, 7:15, 9:45

SEMI-PRO R
[12:00] 2:20, 4:40, 7:30, 9:50

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[12:30] 2:50, 5:10, 7:35, 10:10

STEP UP 2 THE STREETS PG13
[11:45, 12:30] 2:05, 2:50, 4:25, 5:10, 6:50, 7:35, 9:25, 10:10

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