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Mean Girls (DVD) Review

By Britt Gillette

One of the funniest films of 2004, Mean Girls ranks among some of the best high school comedies

of all time. Right up there with Clueless, Fast Times At Ridgemont High, and American Pie, Mean Girls has some of the most hilarious comic scenes of the decade. Written by Saturday Night Live mainstay Tina Fey (who also stars as a teacher in the film), Mean Girls is supposed to chronicle some of the author's personal experiences in the social world of academics. Irrespective of its similarities to real life, Mean Girls is a light-hearted comedy with likeable characters, and it's just plain funny...

Lindsay Lohan plays Cady Heron, a previously home-schooled, sixteen year old daughter of two world-traveling anthropologists. When her parents decide to settle down, Cady attends public school for the first time in her life. While there, she befriends social outcasts Janis Ian (Lizzy Caplan) and Damian (Daniel Franzese) who tell her all about the inner-workings of their high school. Cady learns about The Plastics, a group of three girls who compose the social elites of the school. The previous beneficiary of Plastics leader Regina's wrath, Janis longs for the day when she can exact revenge on her former best friend from eighth grade.

When The Plastics – Regina George (Rachel McAdams), Gretchen Wieners (Lacey Chabert), and Karen Smith (Amanda Seyfried) – take a liking to Cady and give her an exclusive invitation to eat lunch with them, Janis sees her opportunity for revenge. She concocts a plan to send Cady into the world of The Plastics as an "undercover agent," and together, Cady, Janis, and Damian work to dig up dirt on the girls. However, the line between pretend and reality starts to blur for Cady, souring her relationship with Janis. And Cady's affection for Regina's former boyfriend Aaron (Jonathan Bennett) threatens to create a permanent chasm between the two girls... Throw in a showdown between two groups of math-letes, and you've got yourself quite a movie!

As the lead character, Cady, Lindsay Lohan portrays a very likeable person, an intelligent, sweet girl who experiences her first foray into the world of public school. The audience's ability to identify with and like Cady makes it easier to enjoy a film where she alienates two groups of high school clicks and virtually everyone else around her. Meanwhile, Rachel McAdams (rising Hollywood star and lead from The Notebook) is brilliant in her performance as the socially aggressive, backstabbing Regina George.

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Mean Girls is a classic Darwinian high school comedy, similar to the hit TV show Freaks And Geeks, except with a little less edge. If you enjoyed the high school comedy films of the 1980's, like Can't Buy Me Love, then you'll thoroughly enjoy Mean Girls. With a well-written screenplay and supporting appearances by Saturday Night Live regulars Tina Fey and Tim Meadows, Mean Girls is a hilarious comedy and a definite must-see film...

Britt Gillette is author of The DVD Report (

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), a blog where you can find

more reviews like this one.

Recordable DVD formats explained

By Kenny Hemphill

Recordable DVD formats explained by Kenny Hemphill

Picking your way through the ton of information available on recordable DVD formats can be a nightmare. To help you out, we've done our best to distill it into this summary.

There are five recordable versions of DVD; DVD-R for General, DVD-R for Authoring, DVD-RAM, DVD-RW, and DVD+RW. None of the formats is fully compatible with the other although there are drives which will read, and in some cases write to more than one format.

DVD-R for General and DVD-R for Authoring are essentially DVD versions of CD-R. And DVD-RW is a DVD version of CD-RW. All three formats can be read in standard DVD-ROM drives and in most DVD video players. The difference between DVD-R for General and DVD-R for Authoring is that DVD-R for General is a format intended for widespread consumer use and doesn't support 'professional' features such as piracy protection or duplication in mass duplicators. The Pioneer DVD-RW drive which is the most popular PC device for writing to DVD uses the DVD for General format. And as the case with CD, DVD-RW is essentially the same as DVD-R except that it can be erased and written to again and again.

DVD-RAM is slightly different as it is a sector based disc which mounts on the desktop of a PC when inserted into a drive. Files can then be copied to it in the same way as any other mounted media. Some single-sided DVD-RAM discs can be removed from their caddy and inserted in a DVD-ROM drive which will then be able to read the content of the disc.

There are DVD video recorders which use the DVD-RAM format. This enables them to pull off clever tricks like timeshifting - where you can watch the beginning of a programme you have recorded while you are still recording the end on the same disc.

DVD+RW is the newest format and not supported by the DVD Forum, the body which sets the standards for DVD. However, it is supported by some of the biggest electronics and computer manufacturers, and is therefore likely to stick around.

It is also the format used by Philips in its DVD video recorders. Despite not being authorised by the DVD Forum, DVD+RW is claimed by its supporter to be compatible with more DVD video players than DVD-R and DVD+RW writers are found in PCs from quite a few manufacturers.

Kenny Hemphill is the editor and publisher of

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