

Working Girl's strong cast overcomes weak plot

Working Girl ★★ 1/2
Cineplex Eaton Centre

review by Cheryl Onciul

Working Girl is director Mike Nichols' 1988 reworking of the classic Hollywood success fantasy. While the plot is fairly entertaining, there is definitely something missing from the story, leaving the viewer somewhat unsatisfied. Luckily for all involved, however, the performances of Melanie Griffith, Harrison Ford, and Sigourney Weaver save the audience from utter boredom.

The action of the story focuses on Tess McGill (Melanie Griffith). Tess is a hard

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working Wall Street secretary who aspires to make it big in the stock market world. She has many creative ideas but has been unable to gain any recognition for her talents. When her new boss, Katherine Parker (Sigourney Weaver) breaks her leg on a ski trip, Tess seizes the opportunity to break into Wall Street society. She does a complete overhaul on her style — her hair, her manner of dress, and her speech — in an attempt to fulfill her dreams of success on the New York Stock Market. Tess arranges to meet Jack Trainer (Harrison Ford) at an invitational party for the industry's top brokers, and there begins

her professional and romantic association with him.

The problem with *Working Girl* is that it portrays Wall Street as a place where women must resort to manipulation, deception, and prostituting themselves to become successful. There is not a single female character in this film for whom I can have the least bit of respect: Katherine Parker has clearly attained her prestigious position by stealing others' ideas and flirting with male executives. Tess's co-workers represent the stereotypical petty, gossiping, tacky secretaries. While some people may identify with Tess McGill's determination and ambition, I find that her methods of achieving success destroy any admiration which I might have felt for the character.

In keeping with the typical Hollywood movies of the '80s, *Working Girl* is saddled with classic love triangles. First there is the situation involving Tess and her lover, Mick Dugan. Mick cheats on her with a cheap girl from their neighbourhood, and then attempts to regain Tess's love. There is also the triangle between Tess, Jack Trainer, and Katherine Parker. These triangles add complications to the story, but do not advance the plot in any significant way.

The only redeeming quality of this film is the performance of the cast. Harrison Ford is in top form as Jack Trainer, the sincere and charismatic broker. Sigourney Weaver is as brilliant as ever, playing Katherine Parker, the bitch you love to hate. However, Melanie Griffith steals the show as Tess McGill. Griffith's portrayal of the struggling young secretary is both convincing and moving, despite the shortcomings of her character. As Tess's best



Left to right: Melanie Griffith, Harrison Ford and Sigourney Weaver inhabit Wall Street in *Working Girl*. The three save the movie with strong ensemble acting.

friend Cyn, Joan Cusack also shows notable talent in this film. Cusack has the rare ability to be both funny and touching at the same time.

In summary, *Working Girl* is a disappointment. The plot is just a little bit too familiar, the characters just a little bit too shallow. What Nichols is lacking in this

film is a theme. The fact that he really has nothing to say about a struggling young secretary in the world of Wall Street is painfully obvious. If you haven't already guessed the inevitable outcome of this rags to riches story, by all means, go see it, but if you are looking for intellectual or emotional satisfaction, you had better look elsewhere.



CHRISTIAN AWARENESS WEEK from January 23rd — January 28th, 1989

Monday 12:00 — 1:00 PM

SUB 034
Praise and Worship

7:30 — 8:30 PM

Business 1-05
Larry Johnson
Ethical Dilemma in Business: Level of Integrity Compared to Moral Absolutes

Tuesday 12:30 1:30 PM

ED North 1-125
Stockwell Day
Political Science, Integrity, and Success: Are They Compatible?

3:30 — 4:30 PM

Tory Lecture 11
Michael Horner and David Wangler
Debate: "Christian Humanism vs. Secular Humanism: Which Is the Superior World View?"

9:30 — 10:30 AM

SUB 034 Tony Campolo
Film: "Living with Yourself"

11:00 — 12:00 AM

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Film: "Living with Yourself"

2:00 — 3:00 PM

SUB 034 Tony Campolo
Film: "Living with Yourself"

7:00 — 8:00 PM

SUB 158 A
Tony Campolo
Film: "Living with Yourself"

Wednesday 12:00 — 1:00 PM

ED South 475
Praise and Worship

3:00 — 4:00 PM

Chemistry V-Wing 110
Michael Horner
Is There Scientific Evidence for God?

Thursday 3:30-4:30 PM

Tory Lecture 11
Michael Horner
Great Sex, Great Love: How to Be a Great Lover

Friday 1:00-3:00 PM

SUB 034
Praise and Worship

3:00 — 4:30 PM

Chemistry V-Wing 110
Dr. Loren Wilkinson from Regent College
The Environmental Mandate: Exploiters or Caretakers? (A Response to David Suzuki)

Saturday 9:00 AM — 3:00 PM

Tory 95
Dr. Loren Wilkinson
Christ and Culture Seminar
Topics: Music Politics Education and the New Age Movement
Cost \$20.00 \$10.00 for Students

Saturday 8:00 PM

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