

[just for reference – my spellcheck is disabled as I am writing this, so there will assumedly be many errors, just not ones I can see :P]

I think this first scene where she talks about the hidden costs of higher education is saying some really important things – but the presentation is a little bit offputting (I guess is the word). The graphics are pretty weak and there is like a generic stock music song playing in the background. I guess to me the film seems like it is presenting itself more as a TV show special than as a film – it just feels really cheap (which it is but still)

Omg I didn't remember this queer subtext :3

Cute dynamic either way if they are just friends or whatnot (yeah I know womz can be friends and it not be sus)

I think the weird dramaticism really works for the test scenes though. I've seen this movie described as a heist movie where they are stealing test answers instead of money and I think that's a pretty apt fit. They are kind of over the top but also still engaging and definitely fun at the least. Like its played to such an absurd intensity that it goes around from taking me out to really taking me in – with slow motion and close ups and repeated shots.

The pool scene o.0 -- finally some eye candy for the men lovers in the crowd :eyes: (tbh he do be cuter when he outta da water then when he in it)

But also like this scene is all too familiar to me. Them rich people and their pools inviting you over for a pity party or whatever. :sick\_face: rich people should like actually be illegal, they get to like play the game of life on a different level (difficulty too). Like they in their own world where different things matter and they live in these gated communities where they don't even ever see the actual "poor folk"

Also the narcissism of relationships is, uh, a mood. Friends are ways to get stuff, s/o are ways to get stuff, kids are ways to get stuff, none of it is because you like the person – its all peripheral (but then I guess they all also got the money to look good, so whoever you doing will be hot at least)

But also, man, why the friend gotta be a lil snitch – just chill and be tumblr bait, don't drag the lame male race into this (/s)

Girl do be prostituting her mind (if I was smart I would make a joke about mindfucking)

Not the maintenance costs oWo (but actually that stuff is so heartbreaking for me; also its despicable and private education is the most evil thing ever invented; charter schools are what was created to beat back satanism – they figured they'd do him one better)

Brooo, not the divorce papers too (but this actually takes me to a separate point. I really like how this film portrays papers and inanimate objects – like the way it films them is really neat, as if they were people almost, with lives of their own and stories to tell, giving them each a close up and a spotlight to speak their truths)

[ok I feel like this devolved a little bit into just commenting on everything and I keep pausing, so imma ramp it back a little bit – ill probably still cut in a bunch]

This movie actually kind of reminds me of Rushmore (shout out to aidan) but kind of inverted. Maybe this is a subgenre of things even. Media about YA-aged children struggling with the difficulties of making do with the private education system – and reacting to that with various intricate schemes (for which the question of if private education is really better emerges). Maybe something there, idk

Nice little The Piano nod with the playing w/o playing and the threat of loss of piano motivating plot movement (but also the piano tapping as a cheating device :head\_exploding: -- very neat and original)

Ok maybe I take it back, the main guy isn't that cute. Just got that rich guy look – very generic

Also the lighting in this movie is super blown out – like everyone's faces look super white and smooth. I assume it has a purpose but idk yet

He's definitely maybe the cutest of his squad. But still

Okokok. This school master bitch though. Bank just did the math on Pi? Is that how people think Pi works? Is memorizing Pi not a common thing? She mega smart, huh

And now she pitting them against each other. Man, rich people have no morals. Everything really do be just a game

And this dweebo is snitching now too. Mc really can't catch a break, huh

The testing scenes really do be the best ones, no contest

There's a good shot in the scene where lynn is first exposed. Where the shot is looking outside from the window into the office and the window is bifurcated in the middle by a beam. On one side is the teacher and the other is her dad. In the middle is lynn. She is literally trapped between these two forces – boxed in and almost even cut out of the picture completely (her own autonomy defaced). Good stuff

"return the money to your friends" bitch how do you think money works? Oh yeah, clearly lynn is the one exploiting people here. grrrr why does capitalism have to mind control people it makes me so sad. Rich people... are not hard workers... they don't deserve their money... so stealing a lil dough from them... isnt... that... bad. That simple. But also, you don't owe them anything – just vibe your own life bb

Tbh the framing device is whatever imo. Ive seen the movie already so I know that its fake confessional but still I feel like it doesn't work the way that they want it to. Im invested in the main story, so when they keep cutting away, I mostly just tune it out bc its not really relevant

Ok, ive worked it out: the editing is super fly and adds a ton of character to the film (and is the source of most of its tension/humor) but the acting and writing range from pretty good and dope to cringe and anti-based pilled. (especially later when the american actors come in – it becomes clear that the directing is not the film's strength, but that's ok, we cant all be the greatest of them all). The shots and cinematography is frequently really smart and stylized too though so idrk. The film is randomly both amazing and wince-worthy, you just have to keep watching to find out which is more apt

Not the toxic kindness – the classic move (esp from what Ive experienced in thailand) :skull\_emoji:

Ok. My working theory is this: maybe the reason the wypipo in this film suck so hard is that they arent actually actors. What if like they are producers or whatever who put up money for the film and so have roles out of that kind of obligation. It would make more sense than they unironically hired these 'uns

This film is good. Buuuuut. How much better would it have been if it had actually been gay :flushed:

(also I realize that the reason pi was in the film before was to bring up the element about memorizing, still think evil school lady's reaction was funny though)

The part about Bank being beaten up by rich hottie is actually so cruel. Also that first sequence of it is filmed really well. Wall-E vibes. If wall-E got roofied by eve first

Nooooo. Not the steve jobes style key note presentation. Im sick :skull\_emoji:

Wait, but they know tooo :skull\_and\_crossbones:

But the pencil barcode thing is unironically so cool. I think about it all the time just in my day 2 day life. Omega big brain.

Tbh Bank kinda cuter than rich boy. Definitely more texture to his appearance at least. Rich boy is like you just put someone in an industrial sander. Very punchable though (too bad Bank was the one that got punched) ((now rich boy got punched :smiling\_devil\_face:))

Just casually having a “jesus” plaque on the door during the big confrontation. As one does

Rich people not understanding conset. The absolute classic

Not act sus on cams challenge: impossible a billion improbable addition. (two imposters in the lobby)

The banks be like: oh yeah send of 600 grizillion dollars that's fine. No overcharge fee for us :)

Im glad that grace has mad skills though (at photoshop etc). nice to see a fellow girl boss with some quirked up talents. (as opposed to her lame-o bf who has nothing but venmo to his name)

Wait! They started section 2 over a minute late :shocked\_face:

Also I just realized, this movie is a lot like slumdog millionare, but cooler (bc cheating is cooler than jeopardy or whatever) and hipper (bc youths are hipper than adults). Maybe that's a genre as well

[side note but you should watch everything everywhere all at once – very good movie imo (I mention it here because it is about what I think this test part is about which is the difficulties of asians in white/english spaces and the constraints of expectations on perfomance)]

The piano makes a return :spooky\_face: and now its poseeesed \*said in scary voice\* but also also – this test scene has like straight bussin choreography (language, I know). The sudden appearance of the surreal/dreamlike may feel a little out of place, but its been kind of popping subtly up all over the movie. I almost made a comment on it earlier. Its really neat how they do it.

I'm still not sure how the essay cheat works tbh. Like I know they send the prompt, but how do you send an essay? Even if you could, isn't that kind of cheating super obvious

Waiiit. The film even has anti-jenna protection built in. that's smart future proofing

Not the screen crack, im sickkk

Why is the test proctor so persistent? Tbh the most unrealistic thing. I feel like if you ran out of the exam room, the teacher would just let you leave at that point. Especially into the subway. That's intense stuff. Real commitment to the bit

I don't have much to say here tbh, its too intense :grimmacing:

Noooo don't delete the picture ur so cute ahahaha

And then she didn't even listen :"("

And now the dad asking to invite Bank to dinner,,, life's too creul,,, I can't

Tbh being honest, this movie has major parasite vibes (more heist here than thriller but explore similar social location and similar themes)

I also like that the rich people had no (0) gameplan. Like they become cheating addicts cool. Maybe they make it through college cheating. But then do what? I know it doesn't matter because they are rich and will just fail upwards either way, but its also just like preposterously childish how narrow-minded and conceited they are (but also too real :skull\_emoji:)

At least get the bag lynn.. you put in the time. But also I understand it I guess and think its probably the right move (but also not a really great one – super tough situation either way)

Wait a second, bank laundry got the major drip now :eyes:

But also also, why did bank suddenly go villain arc? I feel like he was super solidly anti cheat (I know why the movie thinks he did, Im just not convinced that that is strong enough a motive)

Lynns' dad too strong to be won over by satan snake. Ultimate good guy aura

[I don't know what im saying at this point, ill wrap up shortly with some concluding thoughts and summaries]

I'd say, overall, fun movie. Some really strong highlights but also some unfortunate lowlights. The ending imo was pretty weak. It got very diluted and stagnant at that point and the framing device sort of ended up eating the film – jumping back and forth between like 3 different povs. I think a lot of what the film is trying to say is very important and I think that a lot of how it is saying things (not often the important things) is very stylizing and unique – at its best it definitely doesn't feel like many other movies out there. That said, I think that its themes get fumbled along with the ending and I feel like its stance is a sort of ambivalent "cheating is bad because it denigrates your morals" stance without the film saying enough about the climates that incentivize or potentially require it or saying enough about class or school hierarchies. It's definitely a movie that would be fun to watch with people and I'm glad I got to see it again because I had been meaning to return to it for some time, but in the pantheon of all movies out there I think it's not one of my favorites. It's good and enjoyable but it's too consistently not quite there that I can't get all the way in it. If the movie knew what it wanted to say and had the acting resources to say it, it could easily be a great film. As it stands I would give it somewhere between a 6 and a 7, leaning towards the 6 side. I see that I had rated it an 8 before, which I think is not an invalid scoring, but just not where I stand on it right now (especially since having seen more movies in the interim).

Hopefully this is in the realm of what you wanted – I can write more (totally no pressure) or you can just leave it as is.

Another option that I'll bring up is if you have another movie you would have interest in hearing feedback/vibes on totally let me know. I only have like a handful more films to get through and I've only been doing it for a week (I only got 6 responses :skull\_emoji:)

Either way, take care and I hope you are having an awesome summer! Have fun and stay safe wherever you are (if that kind of thing is your bag)