

'The Ides of March' Delivers the Chill of Political Corruption

✖ *The Ides of March* is a well-executed but unoriginal drama that features an incredible cast and serves as a coming out party for Ryan Gosling's status as a major leading actor. What this movie lacks in originality and creative writing, it more than makes up for in the acting and directing, making it one of the best dramas of the fall movie season.

Gosling (pictured here with actor/director George Clooney) stars as an up-and-coming political staffer who gets corrupted while trying to win a presidential election. Again, there's nothing groundbreaking about the plot (really, politics can *corrupt* people!?), but when you throw in George Clooney, Philip Seymour Hoffman, Paul Giamatti, Jeffrey Wright and a surprisingly good Marisa Tomei, every scene becomes a pleasure to watch.

Gosling is in every scene, and he's magnetic. There's no overacting here. When he starts having to make the morally questionable decisions, you can tell he's torn, but it's underneath the surface. He knows his character and makes him believable in

every scene. After breaking out with *The Notebook* and then working his considerable talents on a number of indie films for the last six years, it was time for him to step up to the plate with a leading role in a mainstream Hollywood movie. Combined with his charismatic, hilarious performance in *Crazy, Stupid, Love*, it feels like Gosling is finally hitting the big time in 2011, and it's good to have him.

The funny thing is that Gosling is overshadowed in a number of scenes by Hoffman and Giamatti, who absolutely kill their roles as rival political campaign bosses. Watching these guys chew cigars while dishing political barbs is an absolute joy. Tomei and Wright get limited time but make the most of it, and Evan Rachel Wood gives a compelling turn as an intern on the campaign.

I haven't even mentioned Clooney yet, and that's because his role as the seemingly perfect politician almost comes as an afterthought in this movie. Clooney actually did much better work directing *The Ides of March* than acting in it. He plays down the glitz of politics in favor of the gritty details, which works well given that the film takes place almost entirely in Ohio. This is not *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, and that's a good thing. If you're looking for solid, well-acted drama to see, you can't go wrong with *The*

Ides of March.

Content Watch:

Not for the kids. The movie features pervasive language. There is no nudity, but the film deals with mature subjects, including abortion.