

Tekst 9

FIRST NIGHT

A teen movie for adults only

thirteen

★★★★☆

Wendy Ide

1 TEEN movies have never been more popular, and the teen dollar has never had such an influence on mainstream cinema. But the gap between the glossy, perky Hollywood take on adolescence and the realities of life for the kids in the audience is thrown sharply into perspective by *thirteen* director Catherine Hardwicke's uncomfortable debut feature.

2 The irony is that the certificate awarded to the film in both the US and Britain will keep out the very teenagers whose lives are apparently laid bare in the picture.

3 There's a story behind the story. This is not the rose-tinted reminiscence of a middle-aged studio hack. This is a report from the front line. Hardwicke's co-writer, Nikki Reed, the daughter of a friend, was 13 when they collaborated on the screenplay, the battle scars still fresh from her own turbulent entrance into adolescence.



4 Hardwicke went away for several months and was astonished at the change in Reed when she saw her again. She had spun out of control. Hardwicke suggested that Reed write the screenplay as a form of therapy. The protagonist's abuse of alcohol and drugs, her self-harm and body



Evan Rachel Wood (Tracy) and Nikki Reed (Evie) in *thirteen*

piercing, promiscuity and petty crime, are based on this episode in Reed's life.

5 Although Reed also stars in the film, the autobiographical role is taken by Evan Rachel Wood. She plays Tracy, a conscientious student and good girl, who is hit hard by what, in more innocent times, would have been called a schoolgirl crush. The object of her infatuation is Evie (Reed), the school siren and the undisputed queen of the in-crowd. The friendship between the two rapidly blossoms, with arch-manipulator Evie moving into Tracy's family home and sparking a drastic deterioration in her friend's relationship with her recovering alcoholic mother (played by Holly Hunter).

6 A former production designer, Hardwicke creates a handsome look for the film on a tight budget. Kinetic camerawork evokes Tracy's increasingly unpredictable behaviour, and the colour gradually leaches out of the film as the vulnerable teenager plunges into an ever-darker state of mind.

7 However, little analysis is offered on what might prompt a teenager to self-destruct and it's difficult to decide whether this really is the candid portrait of adolescence it purports to be or whether the presence of Reed as a living, breathing testimonial from the dark side has persuaded us to suspend

disbelief. Still, there is plenty to concern an adult audience, not least the precocious sexuality on display.

8 The film brings with it a sickly realisation that the children we are so keen to protect from exploitation may well be busy doing it themselves.

The Times

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- 1p 35 What does the film *thirteen* distinguish itself by, according to paragraph 1?
- A Its clever manipulation of adolescent emotion.
 - B Its focus on young adolescents.
 - C Its parody of the customary Hollywood clichés.
 - D Its unconventional depiction of teenage life.
- 1p 36 What is the function of paragraphs 3 and 4?
- A To make clear why any film about adolescents is likely to be brutal.
 - B To promote the idea that misery can be turned into a positive experience.
 - C To provide the background for the shocking realism of the film *thirteen*.
 - D To show that Catherine Hardwicke will go to great lengths to achieve authenticity.
- 1p 37 Which of the following summarises the plot of *thirteen* as described in paragraph 5?
- A A caring friendship between two girls turns sour.
 - B An innocent young girl is transformed into a demon.
 - C A young girl is perverted by the friend she idolises.
 - D The lives of two young girls are ruined because they keep bad company.
- 1p 38 What becomes clear about *thirteen* from paragraph 6?
- A It occasionally betrays the director's financial restrictions.
 - B Its storyline is difficult to follow because of the fast-changing scenes.
 - C The camerawork is particularly effective in scenes involving Tracy.
 - D The cinematic effects reflect the development of its storyline.
- 2p 39 Geef van elk van de onderstaande beweringen over *thirteen* aan of deze wel of niet in overeenstemming is met de inhoud van alinea's 7 en 8.
- 1 It offers a truthful picture of teenage life.
 - 2 It fails to go into the motives behind teenagers' behaviour.
 - 3 Reed's acting performance raises its artistic level.
 - 4 The sexually explicit scenes detract from its message.
 - 5 It shows teenagers themselves can be a wicked force.
- Noteer het nummer van elke bewering, gevolgd door "wel" of "niet".
- 1p 40 Naar welke alinea verwijst "for adults only" in de kop van het artikel?