

Annette Bening, Naomi Watts Lack the Connection in ‘Mother and Child’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on May 23, 2010 - 3:34pm

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CHICAGO – “Mother and Child,” with an all star cast of Annette Bening, Naomi Watts, Samuel L. Jackson, Jimmy Smits and Kerry Washington, is mindful of its subject matter, that rare and elusive connection between a mother and their offspring. However, the film has difficulties when the characters become inconsistent with their past backgrounds after that connection is introduced.



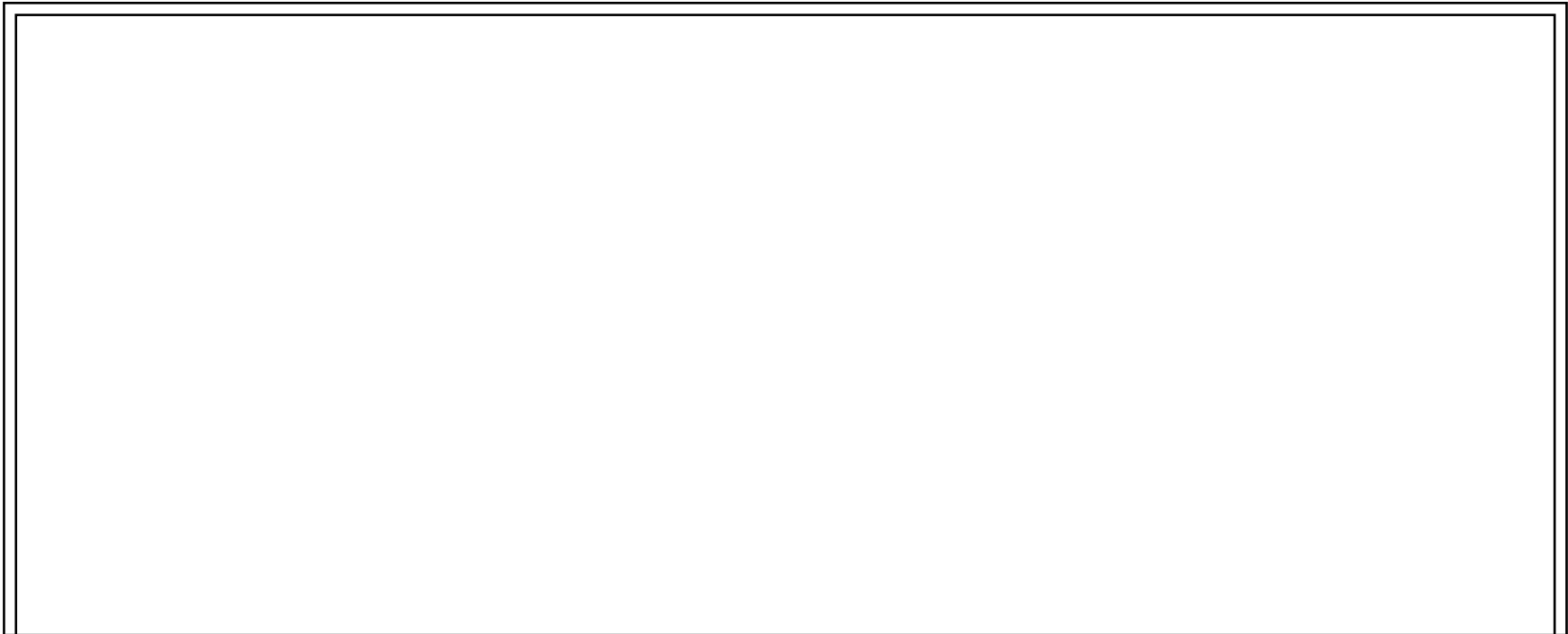
Mother and Child opens with a flashback, a birth. Fourteen year old Karen brings an unexpected pregnancy to term and gives up the daughter for adoption. In the present day that girl is Annette Bening, over 50 and single. Her life consists of caring for her elderly mother and working long hours as a physical therapist. She is embittered, and blames much of her life’s trials on the giving up of her child, who she doesn’t know. It is her obsession, even in keeping a diary of thoughts to the child.

That grown child is Elizabeth (Naomi Watts), a hard charging career attorney about to take on a new job with a prestigious firm anchored by Paul (Samuel L. Jackson). The two begin an affair, where Elizabeth is revealed to be slightly off-kilter, for example tying her fallopian tubes at a young age to prevent any children.

The secondary story involves Kerry Washington as Lucy, a married professional who is looking into adoption because she cannot conceive. The Catholic adoption agency is run by Sister Joanne (Cherry Jones), and that agency becomes the centerpiece for both those hopeful connections...Karen to Elizabeth and Lucy to a child. When Karen’s mother dies, a renewal begins for her through the passion of her co-worker Paco (Jimmy Smits). He falls in love with her and encourages the search for Elizabeth – the adoption agency will put a letter on file. Elizabeth’s life goes into a tailspin when, against all odds, she finds herself pregnant. The resolution to all these circumstances are filtered through the prism of the parental bond.

“Mother and Child” opens in a limited release, including Chicago, on May 21st. Check local listings for showtimes. Featuring Annette Bening, Naomi Watts, Samuel L. Jackson, Jimmy Smits, Cherry Jones and Kerry Washington, written and directed by Rodrigo Garcia. Rated “R.”
[Click here for the HollywoodChicago.com interview of director Rodrigo Garcia.](#) [15]

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Renewal: Annette Bening as Karen and Jimmy Smits as Paco in 'Mother and Child'
Photo Credit: Ralph Nelson for © 2009 Sony Picture Classics

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