

# Film Review: Awkward History Mars ‘Hyde Park on the Hudson’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on December 14, 2012 - 7:56pm

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CHICAGO – Franklin Delano Roosevelt – father of the New Deal, leader through the Depression, war president – and according to the new film “Hyde Park on the Hudson,” he’s horny, baby. Bill Murray portrays FDR, with support from Laura Linney, Samuel West and Olivia Williams.



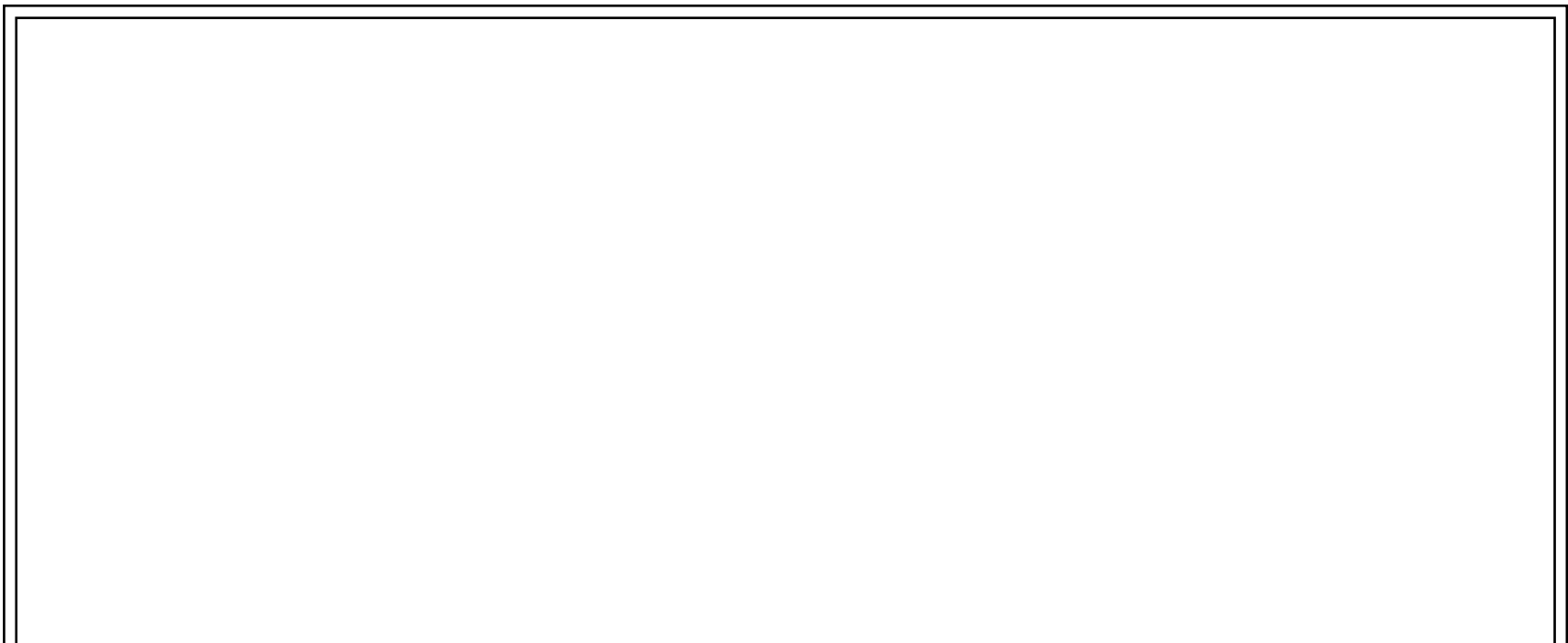
This angle on history – that FDR had multiple mistresses and collected them like stamps – is probably the least interesting and most salacious aspect of the man. That part of him simply isn’t compelling, so the film meanders through the soap opera-type liaisons with a low energy, as if the production itself knows that they’re peddling some sleaze. There are some terrific performances in the film, including Samuel West as England’s King George VI (portraying Bertie from last year’s “The King’s Speech”) and Olivia Colman as his wife Elizabeth, but the usually memorable Laura Linney is reduced to tentative wallpaper as Daisy, the main paramour of the president. If this is the element of history we’ve all been hoping for, then this film gives us what we deserve for our naughty thoughts.

The year is 1939, and the United States is still feeling the effects of the Depression, and are being led for a third term by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt (Bill Murray). The president is angling to get more involved in the second World War, and sets up a meeting with England’s King George VI (Samuel West), to lend U.S. support for the battle weary Brits. The summit will take place in Hyde Park on the Hudson River, Roosevelt’s upstate New York summer home.

In preparation for this event, Roosevelt calls upon a distant cousin named Daisy (Laura Linney) to spend time with him driving about the countryside. In a secluded spot away from the house, FDR seduces Daisy, and the successful result is a new affair. This seems to be a open secret around the estate, including knowledge by FDR’s wife Eleanor (Olivia Williams) and his secretary Missy (Elizabeth Marvel). When the King and his wife Elizabeth (Olivia Colman) arrives, the goings-on within the household may affect the delicate war time negotiations.

*“Hyde Park on the Hudson” continues its limited release in Chicago on December 14th. See local listings for theaters and show times. Featuring Bill Murray, Laura Linney, Olivia Colman, Samuel West, Olivia Williams, Elizabeth Marvel and Eleanor Bron. Written by Richard Nelson. Directed by Roger Michell. Rated “R”*

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Don't Get Up: FDR (Bill Murray), Elizabeth (Olivia Colman) and George VI (Samuel West) in 'Hyde Park on the Hudson'  
*Photo credit: Focus Features*



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