

Matthew McConaughey’s ‘Ghosts of Girlfriends Past’ Overdone, But Relatable

Submitted by [Ebeth](#) [1] on May 1, 2009 - 1:01am

- [Anne Archer](#) [2]
- [Breckin Meyer](#) [3]
- [Daniel Sunjata](#) [4]
- [Elizabeth Opprieht](#) [5]
- [Emma Stone](#) [6]
- [Ghosts of Girlfriends Past](#) [7]
- [Jennifer Garner](#) [8]
- [Lacey Chabert](#) [9]
- [Matthew McConaughey](#) [10]
- [Michael Douglas](#) [11]
- [Movie Review](#) [12]
- [Noureen DeWulf](#) [13]
- [Robert Forster](#) [14]



CHICAGO – “[Ghosts of Girlfriends Past](#) [7]” is the cinematic blending of two familiar formulas: the “love, lose and then love again” framework of most romantic comedies with the idea of transforming ghosts from the classic “A Christmas Carol”. The result: an overdone yet relatable story of a man coming to terms with his true desires.

Celebrity photographer Connor Mead ([Matthew McConaughey](#) [10]) makes a high-profile living shooting the scantily clad. Connor’s true fame, however, seems to come from the serial seduction of his subjects: double-booked dates and time-saving breakups via conference call are a way of life for this master manipulator.



Connor Mead (Matthew McConaughey) tries to save the wedding cake in “Ghosts of Girlfriends Past”.

Photo credit: New Line Cinema

His reputation preceding him, Connor is only a half-expected guest at his kid brother’s wedding. Upon arrival, he makes no effort to hide his disdain for long-term commitment while attempting to convince his brother, Paul (Breckin Meyer), to cancel the nuptials. The presence of Connor’s childhood sweetheart and scorned love, Jenny Perotti ([Jennifer Garner](#) [8]), does little to mute his provocative behavior.

Connor’s antics predictably begin to unravel the wedding and those around him. And so begins Connor’s spiritual awakening – literally – as he’s confronted by the ghost of his mentor: the late Uncle Wayne ([Michael Douglas](#) [11]). Connor’s cad uncle reflects regrettfully (yet comically) on his own life and the way in which he raised his nephew.





Matthew McConaughey as Connor Mead and Jennifer Garner as Jenny Perotti in "Ghosts of Girlfriends Past".
Photo credit: Ron Batzdorff

Uncle Wayne announces the pending arrival of the three ghosts and we're soon whisked away on a journey through time.

This critic feels about the sequence exploring past girlfriends the way she feels about McConaughey's experiment with his long hair: "eh". The supposedly 16-year-old ghost, Allison Vandermeersh (Emma Stone), is distractingly over the top.

Scenes with Connor's teen self (Logan Miller) are carried only by the clever and comical antics from Douglas. Despite the attempted depiction of turmoil, the only moving scene is that of Jenny's realizing Connor has left her. The rest remains detached.

One of the biggest issues with the film is in its depiction of women. Only two among dozens of female characters demonstrate self-respect and intelligence. Jenny, who is Connor's love interest, and Melanie (Noureen DeWulf), Connor's assistant, are gems in their smart and sassy ways.

However, the three bridesmaids (Camille Guaty, Rachel Boston and Amanda Walsh) seemed to all play the same sex-crazed and dim-witted character, all of Connor's involvements are quick to be bedded and naive and even the love of his brother's life, Sandra (Lacey Chambert), is an often shrieking and nonsensical bridezilla.

For a film about a man's learning the value of women and relationships, this repeated persona seems an unfortunate dynamic. The movie, however, still manages to be enjoyable.



Matthew McConaughey stars as Connor Mead in "Ghosts of Girlfriends Past".

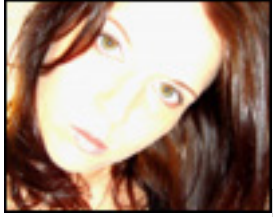
Photo credit: New Line Cinema

Through his casual approach, McConaughey makes the obnoxious Connor Mead likable; Douglas is a bright and believable ladies man; and Garner is a pleasure to watch as she embraces the zingy banter stirred by her character. Though a brief appearance, Robert Forester (as the bride's retired Marine sergeant father who turns into an ordained minister) provides some true comedy.

The cleverly written script by Jon Lucas and Scott Moore is peppered with just enough insights and witty humor to keep the film engaging and relevant.

Though not without its flaws, "Ghosts of Girlfriends Past" is a worthwhile trip to the movies. There are aspects of each of these characters we have all known or experienced ourselves and everyone's able to take away a little something from this light-hearted comedy.

"Ghosts of Girlfriends Past," which stars Matthew McConaughey, Jennifer Garner, Michael Douglas, Breckin Meyer, Lacey Chabert, Robert Forster, Anne Archer, Emma Stone, Daniel Sunjata and Noreen DeWulf, opened everywhere on May 1, 2009. The film is rated PG-13.



[15]

By ELIZABETH OPPRIECHT

HollywoodChicago.com

elizabeth@hollywoodchicago.com [15]

© 2009 Elizabeth Opprecht, HollywoodChicago.com

Source URL (retrieved on Apr 25 2024 - 1:57pm):

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/7650/matthew-mcconaugheys-ghosts-of-girlfriends-past-overdone-but-relatable>

Links:

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/ebeth>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/anne-archer>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/breckin-meyer>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/daniel-sunjata>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/elizabeth-opprecht>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/emma-stone>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/ghosts-of-girlfriends-past>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/jennifer-garner>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/lacey-chabert>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/movie-review/matthew-mccounaghey>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/michael-douglas>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/labels/review.html>
- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/noureen-dewulf>
- [14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/reviews/robert-forster>
- [15] <mailto:elizabeth@hollywoodchicago.com>