

Celebrity culture in mean girls

[Entertainment](#), [Movie](#)



Mean Girls, written by Tina Fey and directed by Mark Waters, takes its viewers through high school from the perspective of Caddy Heron, a young girl who never known what "high school" genuinely meant. Upon arrival, she makes friends with Janis and Diana, who were in the stereotypical "unpopular" crowd. They warn her to stay away from "The Plastics", an exclusive clique that includes three drama-filled girls who are superficial, spiteful, and have vicious attitudes that obtain their power and fame from beauty and glamour.

However, "The Plastics" ask Caddy to join them. Caddy, Janis, and Diana together plot against the leader of The Plastics, Regina George, the most monstrous of them all. In reality, the more time Caddy spends with The Plastics, the more she starts to actually become one. The Plastics themselves show how monstrous qualities are formed in celebrity culture, while the use of Caddy is the perfect example of how culture builds up celebrities to break them back down. The Plastics took Caddy, someone who was naive and candid, and turned her into something she is not through the manipulation of their own standards and rules.

Celebrity culture heavily relies on qualities of manipulation. This was done through thru burn book, etc Rumors and lies are one are heavily used in manipulation. This is the epitome of celebrity gossip, shown in Mean Girls through Regina George. Regina finds out Caddy has a crush on Aaron Samuels, her ex boyfriend, and promises Caddy that she would talk to Aaron for her; however, Regina fabricates lies to Aaron; "She [Caddy] writes all over her notebook 'Mrs.. Aaron Samuels'. And she made this tee-shirt that says, 'I heart Aaron', and she wears it under all her clothes...

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She saved this Kleenex you used and she said she's going to do some kind of African voodoo with it to make you like her". Evidence In nineteenth century literature is provided in Frankenstein, when Victor Frankenstein manipulates his monster through lies: He tells his monster he would create a female companion for him, and afterward declares " Bygone! I do break my promise: never will I create another like yourself, equal in deformity and wickedness" and proceeds " to [tear] to pieces the thing on which [he] was engaged" (175).

Both Regina and Victor broke their promises, developing a kind of behavior that is so focused on policing others, they almost seem to lose track of themselves; they are so busy broadcasting what they hate, and so focused on consumption of their rival with their loathsome fascination, they do not realize their own personalities turn monstrous. They become so engrossed in this idea, they are unable to distinguish that this hate they developed is the sole reason for their viciousness and misery.

This happens when one must realize one's own identity is crafted from the act of hating. It almost seems like superficial celebrities in celebrity ultra love, yet hate, to be hated; yet they love the act of hating, and use this hate to surround their world. This kind of " high school" attitude filled with rumors and lies that Regina possesses exists in the celebrity world, and if it continues, it will influence animosity and disgust, that a world of peace, accuracy, and love may no longer be accomplished. Another key to manipulation is secrecy.

There are countless examples of this in *Mean Girls*. For example, the scene of The Plastics when they are all on the phone; When Gretchen was on the phone with Caddy, it turned out to be a three-way call with Regina, but Caddy didn't know. This complexity progresses when viewers realize the girls are all interlinked, all on the phone with each other on separate lines; Karen gets a call from Regina, puts her on hold, and proceeds to talk to Gretchen and says, "It's Regina, she wants to hang out tonight but she told me not to tell you".

This is similar to the theme of secrecy in *Frankincense*: Victor states, "The world to me, is a secret, which I desired to discover" (26), "I have one secret, Elizabeth, a dreadful one; when revealed to you, it will chill your frame with horror" (218), and he refuses to tell the secret to his audience, telling them to "listen patiently until the end of [his] story, with which [he] is acquainted with" (44). This is similar to *Mantilla*, where "[her father] has a secret grief that destroys [them] both: but [he] must permit [Mantilla] to win this secret from [him]" (47).

The fact that one possesses a secret, holds it vital, and purposely shields it from the world acknowledges a kind of unmoral sin, or practical wrongdoing; celebrities allow these secrets to internally eat them alive like in *Frankincense* and *Mantilla*, or whether it makes their behavior more aggressive like in *Mean Girls*, these secrets have the ability to change and manipulate others. In celebrity culture, a secret is a form of power, yet vulnerability - a secret itself could stand for everything one can't see.

The public blows these secrets up with crazy ideas and provides evidence with the theories they project onto it. The secret could mean nothing, yet everything, at the same time. This is because that a secret exists. It does not matter what the secret actually is, because the people who spread the knowledge of the secret form its monstrosity. The people have ample opportunity to take control, seceding as a whole or individuals whether they want to make up a rumor, lie, tell the truth, say nothing, or contribute to the situation.

The people are monsters, because they take complete control over the situation. An example of this is all of Lord's "fans" who (most likely) made her miserable because they did not approve of the physical appearance of her boyfriend. [A concluding sentence is needed here] Manipulation is also acquired through self-pity, which is shown in Mean Girls with the Burn Book. The Burn Book, which belongs to Regina George, is a book essentially signed to bully her classmates: it has students' pictures with mean phrases, secrets, and other things about them.

Regina takes her book, puts her own picture on it, and writes something mean about herself. She then reports it to her school's principal and says, "I found it in the girl's bathroom! It's so mean". This is similar to when Victor seeks sympathy from Elizabeth in Frankincense: "If you knew what I have suffered from, and what I may yet endure, you would endeavor to let me taste the quiet, and freedom from despair, that this one day at least permits me to enjoy' (222).

In *The Complete Poems and Selected Letters of John Keats*, in a short poem called "When I have Fears", self-pity is asked for when Keats shows he is in pain, likes the pain, and wants to be acknowledged for his pain: "Of the wide world I stand alone, and think Till love and fame to nothingness do sink" (301). Just like Keats and Shelley, their own needs. Regina did this just so she could get Caddy in trouble, Frankincense did this to make it look like it wasn't entirely his fault for the monster's actions, and Keats uses his fans' sympathy to become liked.

The public falls into a part of this ultra, where one blames someone else; even the victims themselves get blamed for fault. Besides from celebrities' success, looks, and wealth, it is not uncommon for the public to condone that they are people, humans, just like them. The public is essentially casting a negative eye upon themselves. Celebrities have people who work with them to help mold their image, but the impossible standards of beauty and perfection they try to fulfill originates from the endless, harsh scrutiny the public places upon them.

When a celebrity breaks this image, or differs from the norm, they automatically are seen as monstrous, resulting in sneering and degrading comments from fans. This monstrosity on the celebrities has a counter-effect on the fans; every time there is a mean comment, they are normalizing harsh judgment, extreme reactions, and offensive language. Celebrity culture takes the blame on how the public has developed a cruel society, through self-pity. Another quality of manipulation used in celebrity culture is feigning their own innocence; this is seen quite often in *Mean Girls*.

Gretchen bullies Regina for violating the rules of their "girl world" by wearing sweatpants on Monday, and Regina laments she is forced to wear sweatpants because, "sweatpants are all that fits [her] right now", implying she is "innocent" because it is not her fault she has to wear those. Another scene is where Regina claims innocence is during lecture, ("workshop"), in the gym, after the Burn Book is discovered: Regina claims, "Can I just say we don't have a clique problem at this school, and some of us shouldn't have to take this workshop because some of us are victims in this situation? Regina implies she is "innocent", and she herself is a victim.

The teacher responds, "That's probably true, how many of you have ever felt personally victimized by Regina George?" Actual innocence and feigning innocence is a huge role in Frankenstein: though Victor blames himself for the monster killing his family, despite his creation, he convinces himself that he is "innocent" and expresses how he feels like the victim. Victor is a contradiction: he is innocent, yet, uses that to his advantage to feign his innocence.

He is innocent because he has never intended his creation to turn into an actual form of monstrosity, but yet, feigns innocence by his hiding his guilt and hiding his knowledge about his family's deaths. Victor's innocence decreases over time throughout the novel; his "UN-innocent" behavior destroys the monster's innocence. Victor is performing an act that could be considered "monstrous" in manipulation by taking away the genuine innocence of one who was never given a chance to prove that innocence. At first Victor decides to "at least listen to [the monster's] tale" (105), but later on, he decides to "tear to pieces... The thing on which the creature's] future

existence he depended for happiness" (190), not giving the monster a chance to uphold its promise. Celebrities start out with genuine innocence, become corrupted, and may attempt to feign their innocence through their roles - However, once celebrities feign their innocence they are portrayed as " monstrous", they are not given a chance to stick up for themselves properly without media and public interference. Lindsay Lohan, off the set of Mean Girls, got into drugs, which could " feign innocence", and assume that she had no role in her fans doing drugs.

According to Good Charlotte, this kind of manipulation is the price of having a lifestyle of " the rich and the famous" (song lyrics). The most vital quality in manipulation is the key tactic in order to be able to get away with spreading rumors and lies, maintain secrecy, create self-pity, and feign illness. Control itself is the piece that connects all of these qualities. Throughout Mean Girls, there are many scenes where one of The Plastics are in control: At the talent show at school, Regina demands for Gretchen to switch sides with Caddy. When Gretchen protests, Regina says, " Right now you're getting on my last nerve.

Switch! " Gretchen acknowledges this control by obeying. Caddy was also acknowledging control when she fulfills Regina's invite to eat lunch with them " everyday for the rest of the week". In the beginning of the movie, Regina took control of Caddy's social life. Halfway through, Caddy became the center of attention; she gained control of Regina's previous fame and publicity and made it her own. The previous examples also hint at some aspect of control. Control is also seen in Frankincense, where the monster says, Mimi are my

creator, but I am your master;-obey! (174). Victor chooses to condone the monster, and the monster responds by taking control, killing all of Victor's family members. Control in *Charitable* is implied when Geraldine takes on a role of masculinity: "lay down by the maiden's side: And in her arms the maid she took" (250-251). In *The Major Works*, "Farewell to a Lady" by Lord Byron shows how a woman's beauty takes control of his life: "In flight I shall be surely wise, Escaping from temptation's snare; I cannot view my Paradise, Without the wish of dwelling there" (1).

By the word "flight", viewers can assume he is going to commit suicide as a means to control the elimination of all ties with the Earthly Paradise's temptation. This kind of intro can relate to monstrosity and celebrity culture in a number of ways; first, one can see that the society of celebrity culture is so monstrously powerful, it is out of the control of the public to change it. Only the celebrities themselves have control of their own lives and culture and how they want to live it.

Second, celebrity culture has so much control and influence over their audience, that they are not only controlling their own lives, but dominating American culture as a whole. By celebrities constantly sleeping with one another, taking part in the lies, secrecy, self-pity, and feigning their innocence inspires the public to act in the same manner. Third, by the news being so obsessed with the daily lives of celebrities, it almost implies as if they are encouraging the public to become more and more like celebrity stalkers.

Lastly, they manipulate the public into believing their redefined definition of happiness, which solely consists of money, fame, and beauty. Rumors, lies, secrecy, self-pity, feigning innocence, and control all tangle together to layer and overlap and form manipulation; celebrity manipulators do not only have control of their own world, but also wish to control the world of others. This allows them to occupy both worlds at the same time, with their rules, in their way: how much more control could a person possibly want?

These qualities of manipulation in celebrity culture are allowing people to lose touch with things that are the most important in life, like friends and family. Celebrity culture is so controlling that it even takes over the roles of others. In *Celebrity Culture: Are Americans Too Focused on Celebrities*, Tompkins, a group an example of how celebrities are taking the roles of [super] heroes: " When I ask alleged high school students who their heroes are, they usually name celebrities, such as athletes or movie stars, not names that did something heroic or noteworthy. (Tompkins 4). Celebrity culture is now one of our prime sources of entertainment; ultimately, celebrity culture manipulates to control their audience's society in such a monstrous way so they are not able to distinguish the difference between genuine importance and the importance of celebrity news. One day, I fear genuinely important news, (politics, world news, emergency issues) will be ignored unless it is presented as a source of entertainment, like celebrity culture.