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## WHAT LOVE IS

Submitted by Rilio Mastrantonio on Fri, 03/23/2007 - 07:00.

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### Rating:

**By Rilio Mastrantonio:** Women and men have long tried to figure each other out with mixed results. "What Love Is" takes a stab at bringing the age old mystery to light through thought provoking banter. Since the beginning of time the battle of the sexes has been raging and "What Loves Is" keeps the battle going.

Tom (Cuba Gooding, Jr.) is waiting for his unknowing future fiancée Sara (Victoria Pratt) to pick up her bags and end the relationship after coming home to a Dear John letter. Tom is joined by his wannabe gangster friend, Sal (Matthew Lillard), who invites a few female friends over to Tom's apartment. Tom is surrounded by his eclectic group of friends including the sensitive environmentalist, George (Sean Austin), his gay friend Wayne (Andrew Daly), and the devoutly married Ken (Mars Callahan). Sal's gaggle of women is equally as liberated and opinionated. After the men get done with their discussion about the opposite sex it is the women's turn. Lead by Rachel (Gina Garson), like the men, the women explore a variety of issues that one wants to say but really should not. Overall, the female characters are actually more interesting and complex than the guys. Anne Hecht (Laura) plays the conservative of the group while Tamale Jones (Katherine) is the never saw a married man I did not like type. Rounding out the women is the seemingly "blonde" Amy (Jud Tyler) and the most normal of the group Debbie (Sheri Appleby). Eventually, the guys and gals get together and have some interesting interactions.

Filmed virtually in one room "What Love Is" has a stage play on film feel, which is a double edged sword. Callahan focused heavily on the characters but at a cost to the overall story. At times, I felt like a change of scenery would have been nice to break up the constant diatribes by the characters.

Writer / Director Mars Callahan wrote some excellent dialogue to help the talented cast deliver the controversial lines which is a saving grace for the film. If you are easily offended by sexually explicit dialogue or intense swearing, then be warned you will be inundated with both. On the other hand, if you don't mind it or even like it

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swearing, then be warned you will be inundated with both. On the other hand, if you don't mind it or even like it you are in for a good viewing experience. "What Love Is" has some very funny moments and gives each character a chance to express their views. Most everyone in the audience will probably relate to one of the characters, male or female. Callahan presents a good cross-section of personalities and combines that with witty conversation.

Bottom line: Prepare to be entertained by a great cast and sometimes shocking adult conversation saying things you always are thinking but never seem to have the courage to say out loud. "What is Love" has a little something for everyone.

This film is Rated R for persuasive language in including graphic sexual dialogue, and some erotic dancing.

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