

but also adds disproportionate punishment (i.e., Lilly D. is served breakfast first). When Lilly witnesses the creepily mobile Lilly D. wrecking mom's laptop (among other vicious pranks), no one will believe her, although her older brother (Connor Price) becomes convinced of her innocence and sets out to discover the truth about the evil toy. Also featuring the bullying tale "The Dead Body," holiday episode "A Creature Was Stirring," and "Nightmare Inn," DVD extras include a "behind-the-screens" featurette. *R.L. Stine's The Haunting Hour—The Series, Volume Two* is also newly available. Recommended. Aud: P. (J. Williams-Wood)

Tiny Toon Adventures: How I Spent My Vacation ★★1/2

(1992) 80 min. DVD: \$19.98. Warner Home Video (avail. from most distributors). ISBN: 0-7806-9733-2.

A spin-off from the early '90s series—executive produced by Steven Spielberg—showcasing the escapades of a new generation of Looney Tunes characters, this 1992 direct-to-video animated film follows the stories of various Acme Looniversity students on summer vacation. Plucky Duck is desperate to go with Hamton J. Pig and his family to the Happy World Land amusement park, but is less than thrilled with the actual road trip (including sitting next to Uncle Stinky). Babs and Buster Bunny engage in a water gun fight that results in a downriver adventure (and a meeting with a *Deliverance*-styled possum family, among other silly strangers). Other characters include Valley Girl-ish Shirley the Loon, Dizzy Devil, lavender skunk Fifi La Fume, and animal-squeezing psycho Elmyra (who obliviously harasses creatures at a nature park). Combining pop culture references and inside jokes (including the finale "plot hole" in which Babs wonders "how those hack writers" are going to get out), this cartoon blast from the past is a strong optional purchase. Aud: P. (J. Williams-Wood)

Winx Club: The Secret of the Lost Kingdom Movie ★★1/2

(2012) 2 discs. 86 min. DVD: \$19.99. Paramount Home Entertainment (avail. from most distributors). Closed captioned. ISBN: 1-4157-6478-6.

The Winx—six fairies from the Magic Dimension—go in search of Earth-raised fairy Bloom's parents in this CGI-animated movie inspired by the Italian TV series (translated for Nickelodeon). The Winx battle disembodied witches on Bloom's home planet between canoodling sessions with their boyfriends—collectively known as The Specialists—who always show up *en masse* to visit the teenage fairies. Each fairy boasts a special power, ranging from the ability to harness natural elements like plants and water, to making magic with music and technology. The girl-centric plot and female

empowerment slogans are admirable, but the fairies' sexy poses, midriff-baring tops, and miniskirts deliver a conflicting message. DVD extras include seven bonus episodes. With its familiar encouragements concerning "believing in yourself" and "trusting your heart," there's not much to distinguish *Winx Club* from similar fare, although due to the popularity of the franchise dolls, this is sure to be popular. Optional. Aud: P. (K. Cruver)

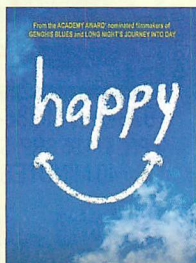
PSYCHOLOGY & SELF-HELP

Catfight: Why Women Fight ★★1/2

(2011) 60 min. DVD: \$99.95. Music Video Distributors (avail. from most distributors). PPR.

Combining expert interviews and profiles, filmmakers Rina Barone and Patricia Ditillio's briskly-paced documentary explores the issues of emotional conflict and sabotage between women. Interviewees—ranging from school-age girls to adult women—describe their battles with each

other, while psychiatrists, a college professor, and one very patient high school counselor offer professional insights and statistics. Others featured include an adult, reformed "mean girl," and an artist who has been the victim of female sabotage. The documentary proposes several reasons for antagonistic relationships between women, including low self-esteem, desire for power, bonding with other tormenters, and the pursuit of excitement. Many of the girls profiled here do seem to be proud of their aggression (drawn by the sense of drama and the perceived respect it brings them). One expert makes the depressing suggestion that women are actually hardwired to fight with each other. By the end of the film, however, many of the young girls have either grown out of their catty behavior or are on the way to doing so. Unfortunately, it is not always clear how or why some interviewees here are perceived to be improving, weakening an otherwise effective examination of an interesting subject. A strong optional purchase. Aud: P. (K. Cruver)



Happy ★★★

(2011) 75 min. DVD: \$19.99. Passion River (avail. from most distributors).

The Declaration of Independence argued that American citizens had the right "to Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." But what is happiness, and how do we acquire and keep it? Filmmaker Roko Belic's documentary examines one of our most prized but elusive emotional states. Many Americans equate material success with happiness, but *Happy* shows us an Indian rickshaw driver, a Louisiana Cajun bayou fisherman, and

African Namibian tribe members who are all poor in wealth, but rich in happiness. Researchers point out that many happy people are nurtured by close family ties and communities, which encourage cooperation and service as members look out for each other. Some of the world's happiest places are visited, including the Kingdom of Bhutan, which measures "gross national happiness"; the Japanese island of Okinawa, home to a large number of the world's oldest folks; and Denmark, where "co-housing" communities enable residents to live and eat together in an extended family setting. The documentary describes how happiness produces longer, healthier lives, and helps us achieve larger goals or overcome adversity, illustrated here by a former beauty queen disfigured in an accident, who battled the long journey back to love, happiness, and self-acceptance. The human brain plays a key role in happiness—releasing dopamine to maximize pleasure—while also being stimulated by physical activity, the seeking out of new experiences, and the cultivation of care and compassion for others. *Happy* does not minimize the obstacles to happiness, but—backed by scholarly insights and specific examples—offers a solid, realistic look at the universal longing for joy. Recommended. Aud: C, P. (S. Rees)

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

Holy Rollers ★★1/2

(2011) 91 min. DVD: \$24.95. Passion River (avail. from most distributors).

Documentarian Bryan Storkel's *Holy Rollers* could hardly be more high concept, reminiscent of the (loosely fact-based) Las Vegas thriller *21*—only with a major twist. The film

follows a conspiratorial team of card-counting blackjack players, all from geographically diverse Christian-evangelical churches (some are pastors themselves), who train for coordinated operations designed to win big at casino tables across the USA—for the greater glory of God. Winnings, we're told, will go right back to funding struggling ministries or other worthy causes. Some of these blackjack experts declare they actually hate gambling (cont. on pg. 58)