

# [***Opinion: 'Vivek is not MAGA.' Trump's bitter breakup with Ramaswamy***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6B3V-67H1-JBSS-S01P-00000-00&context=1516831)

CNN Wire

January 15, 2024 Monday 12:48 PM GMT

Copyright 2024 Cable News Network All Rights Reserved

**Length:** 961 words

**Byline:** Opinion by Dean Obeidallah

**Dateline:** (CNN)

**Body**

(CNN) &#8212; In recent days, a spat has broken into public view between two people who, judging from past displays of affection, once seemed to like each other. But their relationship has imploded in a very public blow-up.

No, I'm not talking about "Regina" and "Cady" from the new version of [*"Mean Girls"*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/10/entertainment/mean-girls-review/index.html) released this weekend. I'm talking about the ugly, but equally amusing, fight between former President Donald Trump and fellow GOP presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy.

You might not have been following this latest Hollywood premier and might not even be a fan of musicals. But if you follow ***politics***, you can't help but see how small-minded machinations and name-calling between two of the GOP's leading figures is strongly reminiscent of the petty backstabbing you might recall from your high school cafeteria.

Beyond that, it's the latest in a long list of examples where Trump insists on absolute fealty - and another sign of his [*inability to remain loyal to anyone*](https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/7/31/16065040/donald-trump-disloyalty) - even those who have gone to great lengths to try to please him.

The new version of the movie - which was written by Tina Fey, as was [*the 2004 original*](https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0377092/) - tells the [*story of Cady Heron*](https://ew.com/mean-girls-review-tina-fey-musical-update-of-teen-classic-8424303), a transfer student at a midwestern high school where the social order is ruled by Regina George, queen bee of a clique of friends known as "The Plastics."

Despite the established pecking order, Cady becomes popular, and treachery ensues: Cady pretends to support and help Regina but secretly is working to undermine her to win the affection of a popular boy at school. It all leads to a very public showdown with the eventual requisite happy ending.

Pivot now, to ***politics***: After what happened this weekend between Trump and Ramaswamy, all the elements are there for Tina Fey to pen another version of the film called "Mean Guys." It can even be a musical like the new "Mean Girls," after all, a lot of words rhyme with "Trump." (Although not so much with Vivek.)

This story would begin when the new guy to ***politics***, 38-year-old Ramaswamy, joins the GOP presidential race and, like Cady in "Mean Girls," quickly attracts the attention of many of his rivals, including Trump.

As the plot thickens, we'd have a love fest as Ramaswamy praises Trump, calling him the [*best president of the 21st century*](https://www.politico.com/news/2023/08/24/trump-ramaswamy-republican-debate-00112716)." In response, the very thin-skinned and pathetically needy Regina - by whom I mean Trump - would sing the praises of Ramaswamy, [*calling*](https://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/4177516-trump-ramaswamy-possible-vp-very-good/) him everything from "great" to "a very, very, very intelligent person" who might even be "very good" contender to be Trump's vice-president.

As recently as last month, the mutual affection between these two was on display, with Ramaswamy lavishing praise on Trump after the fourth GOP presidential debate. The former President [*responded in kind, writing*](https://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/4351418-trump-ramaswamy-fourth-gop-debate-winner-2024/) on social media, (after slamming the other Republican) candidates: "Vivek WINS because he thinks I'm great."

But it now appears Ramaswamy all along was channeling his inner Cady by [*falsely painting*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/13/politics/trump-ramaswamy-2024/index.html) himself as a Trump fan, when he was actually trying to undermine him to win the affection - and votes - of Trump supporters. At least that is what Trump appears to believe.

As CNN [*reported*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/13/politics/trump-ramaswamy-2024/index.html), Trump was apparently annoyed when Ramaswamy told the press that he is a "wounded" candidate, given the fact he's [*facing 91 criminal charges*](https://www.cnn.com/audio/podcasts/cnn-tonight/episodes/c892c2a8-4fbc-4368-8280-b06a008e13cd) in four different jurisdictions. As one Trump adviser [*told*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/13/politics/trump-ramaswamy-2024/index.html) CNN on Saturday about Ramaswamy, "He's been making slights at the former president and we have noticed," adding, "If you poke the bear, the bear will bite back."

The bear bit back on Saturday, after Ramaswamy [*posted*](https://www.mediaite.com/politics/vivek-is-not-maga-trump-turns-on-deceitful-ramaswamy-right-before-iowa-caucus-just-after-this-photo/) on social media a [*photo*](https://x.com/VivekGRamaswamy/status/1746282487469203626?s=20) of himself with a group of young men in Iowa wearing T-shirts featuring Trump's mugshot from his Fulton County election subversion arrest bearing the words, "Save Trump, Vote Vivek." Ramaswamy's post read: "A group of young men in Iowa came out in the blizzard. They sent a clear message."

That apparently was too much for Trump, who brutally [*slammed*](https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/13/politics/trump-ramaswamy-2024/index.html) Ramaswamy on social media, sharing how he felt betrayed by the young businessman who had "started his campaign as a great supporter." Trump added that he now sees him for who he really is: "Unfortunately, now all he does is disguise his support in the form of deceitful campaign tricks."

The former president urged his supporters not to be "duped" by Ramaswamy and to vote for him instead. Trump even went so far to banish Ramaswamy from his circle of most ardent supporters, writing, "[*Vivek is not MAGA."*](https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-news/trump-attack-vivek-ramaswamy-not-maga-1234946671/)

How did Ramaswamy respond to Trump's attack? By [*posting*](https://twitter.com/VivekGRamaswamy/status/1746319847787552808) on social media that he still "respects the hell" out of Trump, and writing that he had repeatedly defended Trump in the past. (He also added some type of justification for his actions that frankly made little sense to me. But then again, this was Ramaswamy writing, not Tina Fey.)

In the final, climactic [*scene*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LshX2God-wk) of the original movie "Mean Girls," newcomer Cady, (played in that classic 2004 version by Lindsay Lohan) defeats Regina for the title of the Spring Fling Queen. But by then Cady had evolved as a person, [*telling*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LshX2God-wk) her fellow students assembled in the school gym for the big dance: "To all the people whose feelings were hurt - I'm really sorry."

She then literally broke the Spring Fling Queen crown into pieces and flung the fragments into the crowd as she shared the honor with Regina and all the students she had wronged.

That is where the analogy with my imaginary "Mean Guys" spinoff ends. In "Mean Girls," the characters redeem themselves by reflecting on their past uncharitable behavior and turning over a new leaf. In the case of Trump and Ramaswamy, that will almost certainly never happen. These two deserve each other.

Opinion by Dean Obeidallah

TM & © 2024 Cable News Network, Inc., a Time Warner Company. All rights reserved.

**Load-Date:** January 15, 2024

**End of Document**