

Sibling upset by her sister's rape

Dear Annie: Over the summer, my sister was raped. She chose not to report it. She was at a house party when it happened. She doesn't know who did it. She confided in me the morning after, and I urged her to report so that the person who did it could be prosecuted and, hopefully, kept from harming more people. But I also saw that it was ultimately her decision and she needed to do what was best for her psyche.

I'm still in a very dark place about all this, but I can't talk to her about it.

First of all, I'm sure talking about it would trigger her, make her more anxious than she already is. Secondly, if I tell her I'm really distressed over this, she'll feel like a burden, like she shouldn't have confided in me.

What should I do? I want to do what's best for my sister, and I also need to restore my sanity. I feel sick just thinking about all this. — *Saddened Sister*

Dear Saddened Sister: My heart goes out to your sister. I am so sorry that she had to endure trauma. Your feelings of sickness are completely valid. The repercussions from rape can literally be sickening to all those affected by it.

The first step is to do exactly what you did: Listen without offering any judgment. Simply listening and validating whatever she tells you are the right steps. If she decides later to report the incident, you can offer to take her to the police station. While she is processing her emotions, talking through her things with trained professionals could also help. The National Sexual Assault Hotline is 800-656-HOPE (4673).

You sound like a very sensitive sister, and one thing I would like to point

out to other readers is that if your friend or family member is the victim of sexual assault, avoid any possible victim blaming questions. For example, "What were you wearing?"

I am so glad that you took the time to write, not only because you bring up an important issue but also because it is important that you take care of yourself. Helping your sister can leave you feeling depleted and exhausted.

Dear Annie: I am a member of an artists' coop gallery. We take turns gallery-sitting and generally get together for a monthly meeting. One difficult topic I don't know how to address is that one or some of the men pee on the bathroom floor.

Personally, I don't clean up after men, but this situation bothers me. I would like to address it but do not know how. I welcome your thoughts. — *Not a Handmaid*

Dear Not a Handmaid: The way to address this situation is head on.

Hold a meeting with all members of your coop and explain the problem. This will give everyone the chance to know about the problem, and to air out any other cleanliness concerns. Tell the men that if they miss the bowl and some of their spray winds up on the bathroom floor, they need to clean up after themselves. Violation of this will result in being asked to leave the coop. Hygiene is important in any work place.

Perhaps the men are not aware that they are doing it. So now that you have made them aware, there should be no more sticky floors. Keep some baking soda and vinegar in the bathroom. If there are reoffenders, they should make a paste with these ingredients to clean up their mess.

DEAR ANNIE



ANNIE LANE
Creators
Syndicate Inc.

FILM REVIEW

In the winning 'Booksmart,' a teen comedy revolution

By JAKE COYLE
AP Film Writer

The insanely winning "Booksmart" boasts too many breakthroughs to count. There are the two leads, Kaitlyn Dever and Beanie Feldstein, both of whom we've seen before but not like this. There is the director, Olivia Wilde, whose debut behind the camera is remarkably assured. And then there is the teen comedy genre, itself, which "Booksmart" has blown wide open.

You can tell a lot by a movie's first minutes. In "Booksmart," you know that the smile on your face isn't likely to leave from the first moment that Molly (Feldstein) is picked up by Amy (Dever) for their last day of high school. Without a beat but out of pure enthusiasm for each other, they awkwardly but confidently pop and lock their way into the street. The party that is "Booksmart" has already begun.

From "Porky's" to "American Pie," the high-school comedy has traditionally been ruled by ups and downs of male conquest. Yet that's been changing at least since "Clueless." Recently, Kelly Fremon Craig's "The Edge of Seventeen," Marielle Heller's "The Diary of a Teenage Girl" and Greta Gerwig's "Lady Bird" have pushed movies about teens in enthralling new directions, delving deeper into parenthood, friendship and the pains of coming-of-age with indelible female protagonists who exist well outside of the genre's prescribed archetypes.

"Booksmart" feels like a victory lap in that evolution.

Having spent their high-school years studying and preparing to launch their ambitious lives, Molly, the class president, is headed to Yale and Amy to Colum-



Francois Duhamel

Beanie Feldstein, left, and Kaitlyn Dever in a scene from the film 'Booksmart.'

bia. With RBG and Michelle Obama photos on her wall, Molly plans to be on the Supreme Court. But when they approach who they assume to be the deadbeats of their Crockett High School in Los Angeles ready to flaunt their sterling futures, it's a rude awakening. They, too, are headed for Ivy league schools or, at worst, a primo job at Google.

"You guys don't even care about school," Molly protests. "No, we just don't only care about school," one replies.

With one last night to reverse course, the two friends embark on last/first hurrah, trying to cram a year's worth of partying into one night rather than go through with their original plans for the evening: watching Ken Burns' "The Dust Bowl."

Not being pros at it, though, they spend much of the movie — penned by Susanna Fogel, Emily Halpern, Sarah Haskins and Katie Silberman — on an eventful odyssey just trying to find the popular-kids party and, hopefully, running into their long-concealed crushes: the

popular vice-president Nick (Mason Gooding) for Molly; a smiley skater girl name Ryan (Victoria Ruesga) for Amy.

The plot line won't startle anyone for its originality, but its vitality will. Wilde is especially good at sketching out the girls' classmates. It's a diverse and colorful spectrum of characters, the sort of fashionable and hip kids you might see at LA's Hollywood High. Among the many standouts: Skyler Gisondo, as a rich kid without friends; Nico Hiraga as another skater kid; and Molly Gordon, whose character's reputation has earned her the nickname Triple A, as in "roadside assistance."

It could be argued that by divesting itself of the kind of "Breakfast Club" stereotypes, "Booksmart" has sapped itself of the kind of conflict that exists in every high-school hallway. No one turns out to be so bad. It's full of that graduation feeling where old grudges slip away. Rivals become friends, or even lovers.

But from that rude awakening scene onward, Wil-

'BOOKSMART'

A United Artists release, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association of America for strong sexual content and language throughout, drug use and drinking, all involving teens.

Running time:
105 minutes.

Rating: ★★★★★

de's movie is about how none of the people around us are necessarily who we think they are. One after another, the movie disarms superficial assumptions. Clichés get comically stripped away and real people step forward. It's a blast.

Along the way, Wilde rides the night's ebbs and flows to the thumping score of Dan the Automator, sometimes widening the view to the larger ensemble (also here are Jessica Williams and Jason Sudeikis), but always returning to the relationship between Molly and Amy. It's a sweetly sincere bond they have, complete with their own code word. In a time of need, either can invoke their hero, the young Pakistani activist Malala Yousafzai, to demand the other's absolute faithfulness.

And Dever and Feldstein are just incredibly good company. Feldstein, whose brother Jonah Hill was part of another excellent teen comedy ("Superbad"), has the show-stopping performance but even better is the more deadpan Dever. Just like their characters, they have big futures in store.

Every generation gets their own last-day-of-school romp to replay over and over. If "Booksmart" is the movie for this era, well, lucky kids. I call Malala. Go see "Booksmart."

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