



FILM: **BOYHOOD**

FDG RATING: 4 ☺☺☺☺○

Film Discussion Group (FDG) Scale is 1-5 (5 is best)

Richard Linklater: *Director, writer*
Ellar Coltrane: *Actor: Mason Evans Jr. (the boy)*
Patricia Arquette: *Actress: Olivia (mother)*
Ethan Hawke: *Actor: Mason Evans Sr. (father)*

DATE: August 24, 2014

DISCUSSION SUMMARY: **BOYHOOD**

Boyhood seamlessly compresses episodes of Mason's life over the span of 12 years, ending when he enters college. An amazing cinematic accomplishment and commitment, we see the same actors age during the 12 years that the film was shot, synchronizing with the aging of their characters. The film focuses on how Mason handles the ups and downs as his mother goes back to school and changes husbands three times trying to make a better life for her family.

All of us appreciated the brilliant concept, portraying the reality of life, with daily challenges and intermittent joys and laughs minus any great conflict, drama, or tragedy. We felt the success of the film was due to the compelling ensemble of characters, each evolving over the 12 years. Mason's father is likeable but seems immature and irresponsible in the beginning. He is the "fun" dad, providing some of the comic relief, when he visits Mason. The two have a close, father-son loving bond. Mason's dad seems to grow up along with him, at times gives fatherly advice and forcing himself to have difficult discussions with his son.

Some of us wondered about Mason's personality because he was "too nice", never rebellious, but instead he maintained an easy, go-with-the-flow demeanor. According to a few informed participants, that is one of 3 typical types of child personalities growing up in alcoholic or dysfunctional families. Also, a male child growing up with a single mom, is often more mature.

3 hours in length, some of us thought it was too long, especially at the end. One astute critic noted that as the child actors got older, their acting became less spontaneous.

With only middle class daily reality as the plot, it was amazing that the film was completely engaging, very believable, hitting all the right notes, with excellent acting.

Our 15 film group participants gave Boyhood high marks including two 5s, which resulted in a resounding 4 as the cumulative average score (on a scale of 1-5, 5 is the best).



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See you at the movies!

Adriane Dedic, adedic@pacbell.net

Film Discussion Group (FDG) organizer