



December 15, 2016

Archie's Final Project



Archie's Final Project is an unusual coming of age story about a young man who decides that for his senior high school project, he will commit suicide on camera. So now that I have your attention, the question you have to be asking yourself is...does he do it? But that, in and of itself, is misleading. The bigger questions are much more interesting than to be or not to be. Archie, played with all the "in your faceness" of a *Shameless* sibling (Gabriel Sunday), is faced with a variety of age appropriate and inappropriate dilemmas.

Does he remain a rebel without a cause and call his own bluff? Or, does he do what most teenagers do on their own—stick around to find out what happens next. I loved the use of movie quotes and the

metaphors throughout this story. There is comedy and tragedy and all the suffering that growing up brings. It reminds us, in the end, that we are not the center of the universe, even if it feels that way.

The movie does a good job of displaying the insanity that hormonal teens suffer and the dangers, pitfalls and angst that follows. Archie is an attractive enough fellow who gazes at the girl he feels is unattainable, wishing he could have her. Did I just hear



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somebody say be careful what you wish for? The movie doesn't take the easy road and has a lot to say about the mental health system, the types of professionals that teens often encounter and what parents do and don't do to contribute to the emotional suffering of their teens.

This is a raw and honest look at the psyche of one mixed up kid who's so caught in his own internal drama that he can only see the picture of his life through the cloudy lens of fear and anger. You want to give him a hug and provide milk and cookies. His hero, a dark filmmaker named Vargas (David Carradine) gives him such poignant advice, "If you want to kill yourself, kill what you don't like. I had an old self that I killed. You can kill yourself too, but that doesn't mean you got to stop living."

Archie's Final Project is not in theaters as it was released in 2011, but if you have a moody teenager or if you know one and especially if you work with some, then this movie is worth looking for. It is easy to find online. It is the perfect movie to show during suicide prevention month, which should be every month. If you work with youth who are struggling with relationships, school friends, emotions, rejection, dysfunctional families, etc. then take a chance and check out *Archie's Final Project*. I give this quirky movie four golden tickets.

