

# Good, not-so clean fun

## Young People an amusing, insightful romp

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The Canadian comedy *Young People F---ing* features 10 young people in various stages of undress — if you count the guy who enjoys watching his girlfriend and his roommate have intimate relations — and generally doing what the title promises, and sometimes more. We're thinking here of the married couple who spice up their sex life with a device that the wife uses to penetrate her husband. But it's

all good fun. Not good clean fun, mind you, but good fun.

### REVIEW

#### *Young People F---ing*

Starring Carly Pope, Callum Blue and Peter Oldring.

Directed by Martin Gero.

★★★ out of five

Thus *Young People* should satisfy both its constituencies, those who are there to

see what the title promises, and those who are there to be outraged by it. This is the ideal Canadian movie: a low-budget metaphor for censorship that is at once original, outrageous and government-funded.

It's now almost impossible to see the movie as a movie because of the controversy surrounding it, both because of its provocative title and its position as the symbol of transgressive cinema in the minds of supporters of Bill C-10, the law that could curtail government tax credits to films like this. Alas, *Young People* turns out not to be a film like this: it's filled with nudity and erotic situations, but it has no explicit sex acts and its basic message is that the young people would



Josh Cooke, left, and Sonja Bennett star in one of the stories contained in the new Canadian comedy *Young People F---ing*.

Courtesy, Maple Pictures

be better off falling in love.

So if you can get your mind out of the legislature and into the gutter where it belongs, the film turns out to be a sometimes amusing, sometimes improbable (and sometimes squirm-worthy) look at four couples and one threesome as they move from foreplay through orgasm and on to afterglow.

First-time director Martin Gero balances the stories — filmed with the kind of precise,

over-lit texture that characterizes so much of this country's independent cinema — between the comic and the melancholy, although all of the tales have their share of recognizable types and moments: the first date, say, or the explorers daring to get back together.

Then there's Gord (Ennis Esmer) and Dave (Peter Oldring), unhappy roommates, mostly for familiar reasons (leaving a trickle of orange juice in the

container instead of buying more) that's surmounted, so to speak, when Gord invites Dave to have sex with his girlfriend Inez (Natalie Lisinska) while he watches. The orange juice business seems right, but there's little to root for in watching Gord slap his roommate's bare bottom and urge him on to greater exertions ("she really likes it when you grab her hair.") *The Roommates* is one of the movie's less successful stories.

More like it is the story of the Best Friends Matt (co-writer Aaron Abrams) and Kristen (Carly Pope), who decide to finally have sex and come face-to-face, so to speak, with the realization that longtime buddies have a difficult time being lovers. There are weaknesses in this story as well — the music playing in the apartment seems to present amorous difficulties out of proportion to its importance — but at least there's no third party to slap bare bums.

The comic (and cringe-inducing) highlight is *The Couple*, Abby (Kristin Booth) and her dorky husband Andrew (Josh Dean), a nerdy lover who has no idea how to please his wife until she unveils the alarmingly realistic purple dildo she bought just in case.

That story has its funny moments, mostly in its depiction of Andrew's incompetence in bed, but its conclusion appears to be rather unlikely, at least to the Old People Watching.

Still, the performers are handsome and the stories, even the bizarre ones, are drawn from the great well of anxiety and joy that we laughingly refer to as our sex lives.

*Young People* is amusing and sometimes even insightful in its depictions of both young people and what they're doing. It seems to speak for Canada's youth, and they'll probably enjoy it, presuming they're not too busy.