

## Film Review: Edge Ebbs & Flows in ‘The Edge of Seventeen’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on November 17, 2016 - 12:57pm

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CHICAGO – “The Edge of Seventeen” does attempt to do some different things with the growing-up-too-soon teenager soap opera – it throws in a authentic parent, contemporary sex issues and truthful awkwardness. But it can’t help being too heroic, and too “everything’s all right.”



Rating: **3.0/5.0**

Hailee Steinfeld (“True Grit”) has grown into the title 16 year-old called Nadine, and interprets the material with a decent strength of character. It would be easy to dismiss her performance as “Juno-Lite” (as I did when asked for an instant reaction), but she has a depth of field that goes underneath that surface, even though the screenplay – by writer/director Kelly Fremon Craig – kept feeding her the Juno-type lines. The story also has a juicy bit of desperation, since Nadine’s family is still reeling from the accidental death of their father five years before. The film didn’t need the Woody Harrelson “cool teacher” role, nor did it need some of the strange touches like Nadine’s penchant for seducing boys, then pulling the rug out once some action was attempted. Sure, it was a necessary reminder that ‘no means no,’ but it is so crassly exposed that it was uncomfortable – which probably was the point.

Nadine (Steinfeld) and her best friend Krista (Haley Lu Richardson) are living the adolescent edge-of-seventeen life. Five years after the death of Nadine’s father, her mother Mona (Kyra Sedgwick) is trying to keep the family together – which includes Nadine’s brother Darian (Blake Jenner) – while still trying to make a relationship connection on her own.

When Mona decides to take a weekend with a new beau, Darian and Nadine throw a big party, and Nadine ends up blackout drunk. This allows Darian and Krista to hook up, and throws a wrench into Nadine’s barely-in-control life. It turns out she has no friends besides Krista, so she now prefers to confide in her teacher Mr. Brunner (Woody Harrelson), and allows her life to fall off a cliff.

*“The Edge of Seventeen” opens everywhere November 18th. Featuring Hailee Steinfeld, Haley Lu Richardson, Blake Jenner, Kyra Sedgwick and Woody Harrelson. Written and directed by Kelly Fremon Craig. Rated “R”*



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Nadine and Mr. Bruner (Woody Harrelson) on ‘The Edge of Seventeen’

Photo credit: STX Entertainment



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