

‘Sex Tape’ a Comedy Sorely Lacking in Laughs

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on July 18, 2014 - 9:56am

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Rating: **1.5/5.0**

CHICAGO – Jason Segel is usually fun to watch in just about anything, but he sure isn’t fun in “Sex Tape,” a big studio summer comedy with a fatal flaw - it doesn’t seem to know what’s funny. So like a stand-up comedian on a bad night, it feverishly and desperately throws anything it can think of at the screen in the vague hope that it might be funny even incidentally. Unfortunately Segel, and his co-writers Nicholas Stoller and Kate Angelo needed to think a little harder. Segel’s best work is rooted in human nature. This one seems rooted in sitcoms instead, and not very good ones at that.

In “Sex Tape,” Segel and Cameron Diaz play a married couple with two children. They started out hot and heavy, but now their sex life has gone stale. So they decide to make a sex tape to spice things up purely for their own enjoyment. But before you can say YouTube, their sex tape leaks onto the internet.



Jay (Jason Segel) and Annie (Cameron Diaz) Get Busy in ‘Sex Tape’

Photo credit: Sony Pictures Releasing

This very well could have been a small, raunchy, but touching movie about a couple’s mishaps while trying to liven up their sex life. But you

can almost see the movie making the exact wrong choices at nearly every junction. I'm not sure if this is the result of studio interference, or whether Segel and Stoller just wrote this with something else on their minds. Instead of staying small, the film blows its situations up to absurd proportions and obliterates whatever small humorous insights it had in favor of increasingly hackneyed slapstick.

The rest of the film essentially thrusts Segel and Diaz through increasingly convoluted circumstances as they stumble, fumble, and flub their way around town while trying to track down every remaining copy. I followed it up to a point, but I was ready to throw in the towel when Segel and Diaz drag their family around town, crash through a door with their car, and take the two kids into a porno site's headquarters to break into their servers to erase their sex tape.

Separately Segel and Diaz can be very appealing, but together they have all the spark of a wet sandwich. Diaz can be a gifted comedian and is often willing to do anything for a laugh, but we don't know really have a sense of who her character is – we don't get a sense of anyone's character. They may as well be called protagonist, wife, best friend and co-worker.



The Couple Seeks Counsel From Tess (Ellie Kemper) and Robby (Rob Corddry) in 'Sex Tape'

Photo credit: Sony Pictures Releasing

The game cast of comedy ringers including Rob Corddry, Ellie Kemper, and Rob Lowe is essentially asked to make something out of nothing, but at least Corddry manages to scrape together one of the films exactly two chuckles. The other comes courtesy of a surprise guest star and is a classic illustration of the joke that starts out dumb, then becomes tedious, then becomes annoying, and finally winds up being funnier than it has any right to be because of the sheer length of it all.

As far as big studio summer comedies go this year, this is still better than the Adam Sandler disaster "Blended," but it manages to make Seth McFarlane's old West bomb "A Million Ways To Die In The West" look like "Blazing Saddles."

"Sex Tape" opens everywhere on July 18th. Featuring Jason Segel, Cameron Diaz, Rob Corddry, Ellie Kemper and Rob Lowe. Screenplay by Jason Segel, Nicholas Stoller, and Kate Angelo. Directed by Jake Kasdan. Rated "R"



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