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Girls: The End of an Era

Amanda Stewart · Wednesday, April 12th, 2017

For the past five years, I've come to connect with and adore this group of obnoxiously self-absorbed and oblivious group of "friends" that has given new life to HBO. *Girls* made its introduction back in March of 2012, with critics wanting to claim it as *Sex and the City* for millennials and the voice of today's generation. Whereas I squawk at the term 'millennials' and separate myself from the often negative adjectives aligned with this label, it's true – I'm a millennial.

Girls captures the innocent yet ignorant dreams so many of us grew up believing. You go to college, immediately obtain a successful job, get married and start having kids before you've even started planning your 30th birthday party. Our parents did it, so why wouldn't we? Spike in professional competition and economic downfall, that's why.

I sympathize with Lena Dunham's character, Hannah Horvath, constantly struggling with the frustration of just wanting to be a full-time (and famous) writer but never quite making it. To live out wild adventures that others fawn over while being in such high demand that you can't keep up with the pile of publisher and movie script deals would be ideal. Must be nice, right Carrie Bradshaw? But that's not reality. Reality is building up your dreams and diluted fantasies only to realize that, yes, they can come true, but it's going to take a lot work, your success will look different than previously imagined, and if it does happen, it won't be within your expected timeframe.

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To the naked eye, *Girls* may seem like four self-entitled white girls who expect to have everything handed to them. And to some extent, it's true – okay, it's pretty spot on. And they don't hide it. Throughout the six seasons, Hannah, Marnie, Jessa and Shoshanna are consistently being reprimanded by passing characters for their lack of responsibility, sympathy and common sense. Masked by this inflatable bubble that takes them around New York, they only see what affects them and nothing more. They're not characters viewers obsess over and idolize. They don't look like they stepped off a runway. Their sex is awkward and gross. And their careers (for those that have them) aren't perfectly packaged in a box with a pretty bow.

Girls is not nor was ever meant to be the new *Sex and the City*. It was meant to capture the raw and often ugly yet beautifully woven moments of life. Coming to grips with who we are now and not what we once envisioned ourselves to be. Realizing some relationships were only meant to last a

chapter or two and not the entire book. Understanding that we can be our own road blocks, and making the decision to face our weaknesses instead of laugh them off.

In season six, episode eight, “What Will We Do This Time About Adam?” guest star Aidy Bryant’s character Abigail asks Shoshanna and Ray, “Would you rather live in an ugly building with a view of a beautiful building or a beautiful building with a view of an ugly building?” To me, *Sex and the City* is the beautiful building we pretend to be and *Girls* is the ugly building we try (yet fail) to hide from others. We’d like to think of ourselves as flawless and elegant, but underneath it all, we’re constantly trying to figure out what the next step is and coming to terms with the fact that with each passing birthday, we’re reminded of just how much we really don’t know and how far we actually have to go.

The series finale of Girls airs Sunday, April 16th at 10 p.m. ET on HBO.

Image courtesy HBO.

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