

Reflection on *Mona Lisa Smile* and why you should watch it

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Last week, I had this urge to watch a movie, snuggle into a cozy blanket and enjoy some hot chocolate. On this cold autumn evening, I had no intention of reading a book or doing something demanding. I just wanted to relax and enjoy a good movie.

So I decided to watch *Mona Lisa Smile* with Julia Roberts, as I have never seen this movie. Also, I'm a huge fan of Julia Roberts, so I decided to give that movie a shot.

Mona Lisa Smile is a positive, lovely, and thoughtful film about the importance of education and a woman's right to choose her own future. It is an intelligent historical drama that tells a story in a new and inspiring way.

The Story

Katherine Watson (Julia Roberts) accepted a post teaching Art History at the conservative Wellesley Women's College in Massachusetts in the 1950s. For me, this was already the first reason, why I liked this movie. During my Au-Pair year, I took long walks at Wellesley College, so I could already somehow relate. ;)

The movie uses art to present the way women's role in society had been viewed in the 50s. Society at that time was very largely patriarchal and women were seen as housewives only.

Katherine Watson finds it hard to believe that women could accept dropping their ambitions in favor of just getting married. Wellesley school at that time was more interested in ensuring that students understood their role as a wife. In one class, girls were taught that the only grade that matters is the one a husband gives for the performance of a wife and mother. Ironically, the teacher who taught the students how to act like housewives was insecure and lonely. Katherine criticizes the role of a traditional woman only as being a mother and a wife and concludes that women have the right to make their own choices, have their own goals, and live their own lives.

Appalled to find that even her students believe she is only biding time until marriage, Katherine sets out to challenge tradition and open up a new way of thinking for her students.

Mona Lisa Smile can be quite moving at times. It includes some powerful moments in the film. For example, when Katherine gives a brutal, honest speech about how future generations will see them.



As this movie talks about feminism, it also shows the value of women's education and her right to use it even if she married.

Katherine tried to help the girls avoid making the mistake of failing to pursue their dreams.

One of the examples is when Katherine met Joan, one of the best students in her class.

It surprised Katherine when she asked Joan, what happens after getting married.

Joan replied sarcastically: "...then I will be married"!

This shows that for the students at that time, the main goal was to be married after school.

Why you should watch this movie

In conclusion, *Mona Lisa Smile* focuses on how women were viewed in society during the 1950s. The film portrays the Wellesley school as a conservative place where women are taught how to be mothers and wives.

The main character, Katherine, tries to change this culture by teaching the students that there is a possibility of being independent by pursuing a career and even getting married. In the end, the students realized the importance of education and their role as women in society. They learned that women can also make their own choices without conforming to what

society tells them. This movie left me with some tears, and I had to think a lot about the importance of going your own way.

I had to think about this movie for a while and so I decided to write a blog post about that to share my feelings. I recommend watching this movie, to believe in your ability, and power so that you can achieve what you want on your own and not wait for a husband to do it instead of you.

I can't stop thinking about this movie anymore. Let me know if you have also watched this movie, and what you think about it.