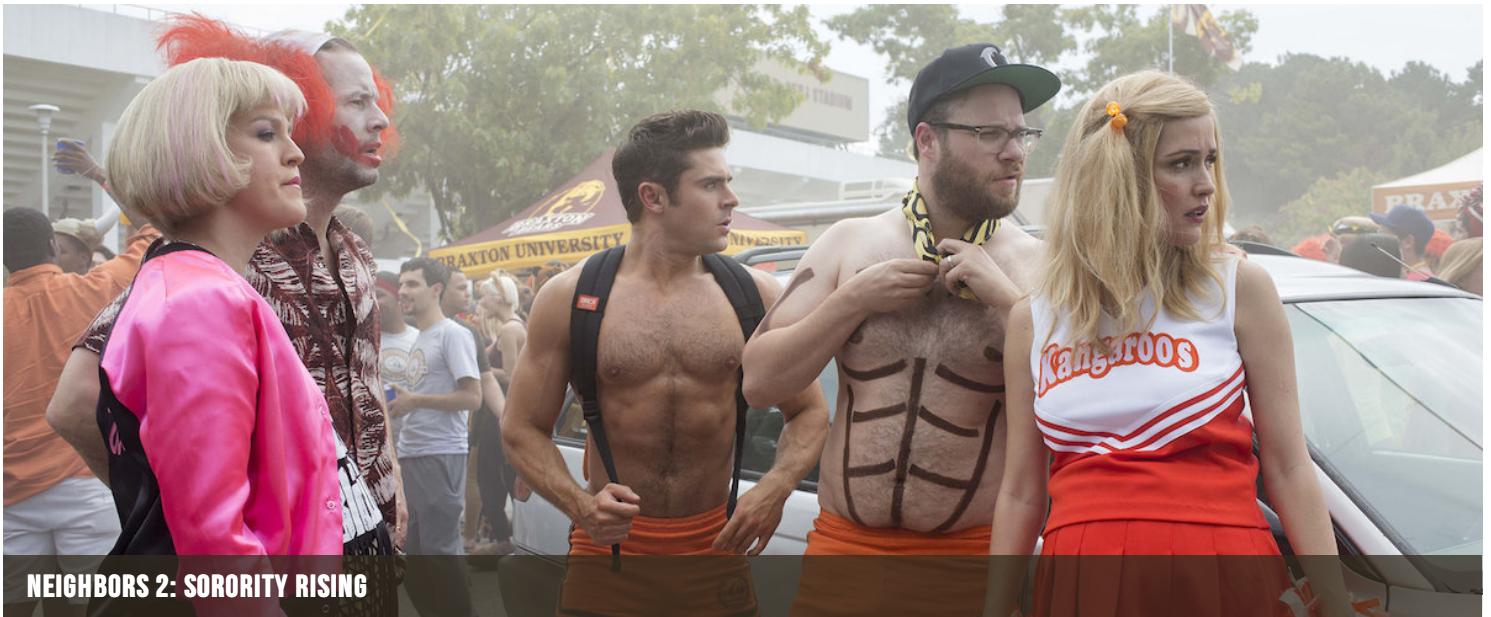





## REVIEWS



### NEIGHBORS 2: SORORITY RISING

| Glenn Kenny

May 19, 2016 |

The sequel to 2014's comedy hit "Neighbors" is a good news/bad news proposition. As my low star rating suggests, for this reviewer it is mostly a *very* bad news proposition. But one does tire, at times, of possibly engendering reader hostility by unloading on a deeply mediocre popular/populist comedy.

So let's look at the half-glass-full, good news side of things. If you enjoy [Seth Rogen](#) as a

 WATCH NOW

general rule, this movie, in which he reprises his role as put-upon wannabe-responsible husband and father Mac Radner, provides some of what could be considered satisfactory Rogen material: some rough verbal wit, a lot of weed jokes, the spectacle of the chunky comic actor with his shirt off, and a bit more of all that. [Rose Byrne](#) reprises her "Neighbors" role as Kelly, Mac's refreshingly salty wife, and Rogen and Byrne display a comic chemistry, banter-wise, that's not entirely without credibility. [Zac Efron](#), also back as frat party boy Teddy, is reliably game and also frequently shirtless, which means something different and possibly exciting when you're Zac Efron. The humor of the film is similarly raucous and vulgar to that of the original. So in the event that you're already a fan, this might hit the spot.

The bad news is that, as movies go, "Neighbors 2: Sorority Rising" barely qualifies as one. It looks like it was edited through some kind of shredder. The movie's premise is a gender-reversed iteration of the first film's, e.g., the Radners, now with two-year-old child, have their domestic stability endangered by a neighboring not-fraternity-but-sorority. (Hence, the title.) Sounds simple, but there's a lot more time expended in the setup of this switch than you might reasonably expect. Possibly because the filmmakers want to make some kind of mild political statement espousing feminism, or maybe for some other reason—like maybe they don't know what the hell they're doing. I say this because in all the throat-clearing of the exposition leading the formation of the party-friendly sorority called Kappa Nu, not a whole lot makes sense.

Once the house next door to the Radners' is rented, the lead sorority innovator Shelby ([Chloe Grace Moretz](#)) makes a near-complete and largely arbitrary transition from Feisty Outsider to Truculent Mean Girl. Because the movie just wouldn't be what it wants to be without having the young actress peer out a window and sneer "It's on."

The movie breaks down into a series of sketches, with Experiments In Outrageous Humor (small children interacting with sex toys, a highly unhygienic attack on the Radner house from the sorority, using a terribly specific choice of spongy weapon) taking extreme precedent over character development and narrative coherence. The scenario is so thin that the movie pretty much repeats the same "what are we gonna do?" scene at the sorority house less than ten minutes after the first one. This seems either more or less quizzical on learning that the movie has five credited screenwriters.

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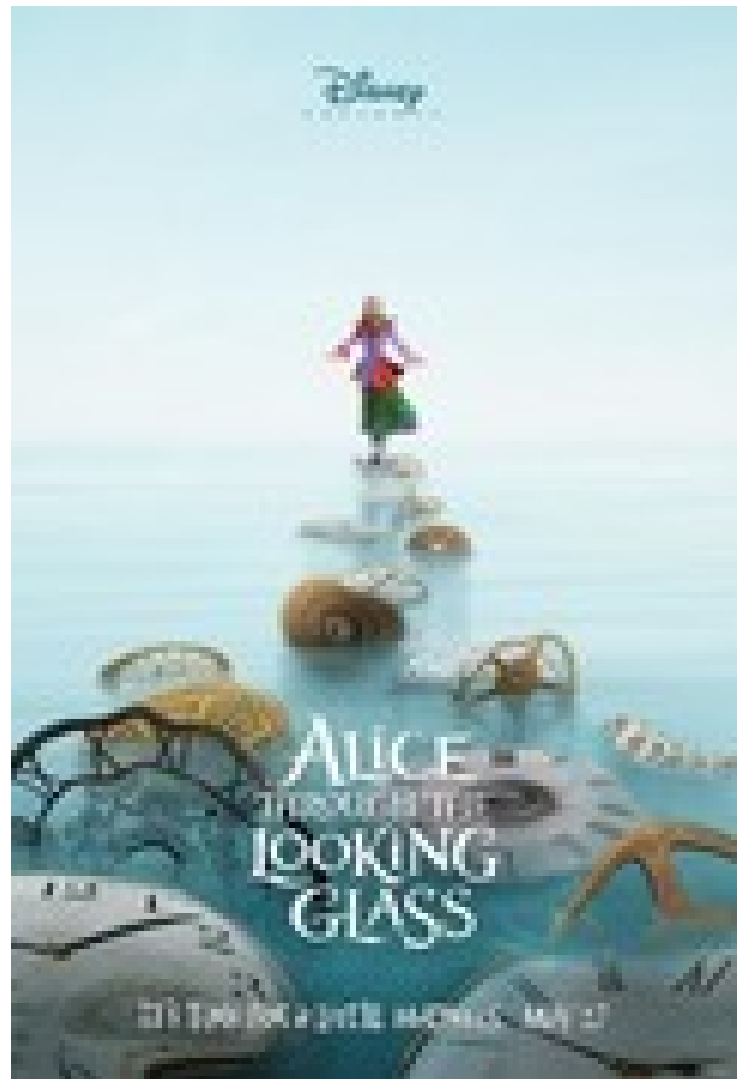
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**NEIGHBORS 2: SORORITY RISING (2016)**

Cast

- [Seth Rogen](#) as *Mac Radner*
- [Rose Byrne](#) as *Kelly Radner*
- [Zac Efron](#) as *Teddy Sanders*
- [Chloë Grace Moretz](#) as *Shelby*
- [Kiersey Clemons](#) as *Beth*
- [Selena Gomez](#) as *Phi Lambda President Madison*
- [Beanie Feldstein](#) as *Nora*
- [Dave Franco](#) as *Pete*
- [Ike Barinholtz](#) as *Jimmy*
- [Carla Gallo](#) as *Paula*
- [Elise Vargas](#) as *Stella*

Director

[Nicholas Stoller](#)

Writer (characters)

- [Andrew J. Cohen](#)
- [Brendan O'Brien](#)

**Writer**

[Evan Goldberg](#)

[Andrew J. Cohen](#)

[Nicholas Stoller](#)

[Seth Rogen](#)

[Brendan O'Brien](#)

**Cinematographer**

[Brandon Trost](#)

**Editor**

[Zene Baker](#)

**Composer**

[Michael Andrews](#)

Comedy

**Rated R** for crude sexual content including brief graphic nudity, language throughout, drug use and teen partying.

91 minutes

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