

gives herself a misery makeover. Director: Ari Sandel (1:35). PG-13: Sexuality, language, partying Area theaters.

Somebody's DUFF" shirt.

In director Ari Sandel's entertaining teen comedy, based on a YA novel, DUFFness is a state of mind: It's about owning your outsiderhood. As narrator Bianca (Mae Whitman) puts it, there's more to high school — and life — than princesses, athletes, brains and basket cases.

Snarky, slightly schlumpy Bianca happens to be BFFs with her school's most popular girls (played by Bianca Santos and Skyler Samuels). She's never

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Circling the drain

thought much of it until football team captain Wes (Robbie Amell) points out that she's their DUFF. Every group has one: the wallflower who doesn't quite click, who consistently gets pushed aside.

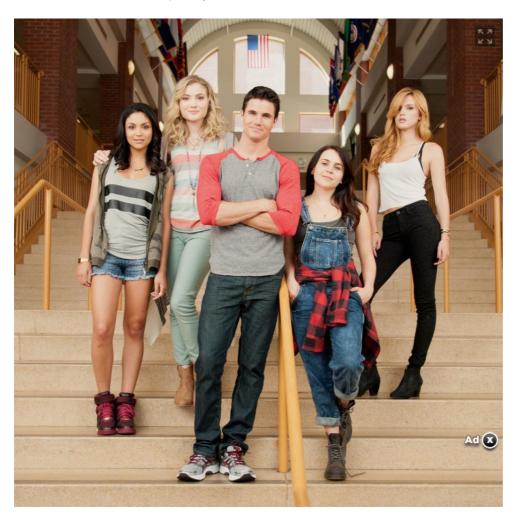
9 'Wild Tales,' movie review 10 'All the Wilderness,' movie review

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Bianca is initially depressed by this observation. But then she gets proactive, asking Wes to help her overcome her DUFF status.

The plan backfires spectacularly when Wes' girlfriend, mega-mean girl Madison (Bella Thorne), decides to ruin Bianca. Instagram, Facebook, YouTube and Twitter are her weapons of destruction.

It's a modern twist on a classic kind of tale — classic being the John Hughesera '80s. "The DUFF" references predecessors like "The Breakfast Club" and "Can't Hardly Wait" with wit and humor. It's easy to connect to Bianca's misery and be inspired by her defiance.



EDITORS' PICKS

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Suri Cruise, along with 15 classmates, were treated to a private preview of "Cinderella" in Los



10 Richest Peop Who Did Not Fini College (Interesticle)



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Robbie Amell and Mae Whitman, with Bella Thorne (far r.) in "The DUFF."

Still, there's something off about a movie that suggests we should all embrace our inner DUFF yet presents an entire cast of superhot teens. If feels like the whole screen's been airbrushed: Bianca's friends are beautiful, her crushes are gorgeous, even the extras are extra-attractive. Where are the geeks, the fangirls, the painfully uncool or even just awkward kids?

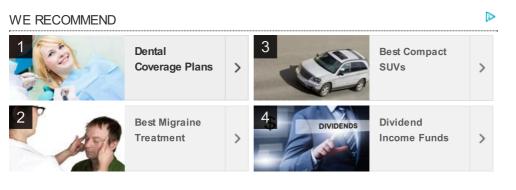
Fortunately, the cast — featuring Allison Janney as Bianca's scattered mom and Ken Jeong as her sympathetic mentor - is savvy and silly.

Really, though, most of the credit goes to Whitman, who stands in, and stands up, for the DUFF in all of us.

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COMMENTS

TAGS: movie reviews, the duff, mae whitman, bianca santos, skyler samuels, robbie amell, bella thorne



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EDITORS' PICKS

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Larenz Tate says his kids won't immediately grasp his new TV One movie.

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Fallon, Martin Short play 'Word Sneak' on Tonight Show

Jimmy Fallon invited Martin Short to play a hilarious game called "Word Sneak.

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death sparks reactions on Twitter Harris Wittels, one of the executive producers of "Parks and Recreation,"

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Thursday in a moving essay for The New York T: --- ------



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Harris Wittels, exec of 'Parks and Recreation,' dead:

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report

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