

Film reveals Texan's struggle to improve sex-ed

By CHRIS VOGNAR
KRT CAMPUS

PARK CITY, Utah — Shelby Knox is tired. The 18-year-old Lubbock native just got into Park City for the world premiere of the documentary "The Education of Shelby Knox" at the Sundance Film Festival. Her hotel room was a bit chilly on her first night, the interviews are starting to pile up, and the sleep deprivation has her seeking a catnap in her publicist's suite.

But she should be able to handle the grind ahead. Her personal journey of the last few years, chronicled in "Education," has steered her for almost anything.

Just three years ago she was a sophomore and conservative Southern Baptist at Lubbock's Coronado High School, in a district with a strict abstinence-only sex education policy. Now she's a self-described liberal

Christian who underwent a baptism of fire by becoming an advocate for comprehensive sex ed in her hometown.

"I was 15, and in my high school I could see it was an issue that was affecting my contemporaries," Knox, now a first-year sophomore political science student at the University of Texas in Austin, said. She has her eyes set on Georgetown law school, is interested in getting into politics and says she'd love to live in New York.

"The people around me were getting sexually transmitted diseases," she said. "Young girls were getting pregnant. I heard all the myths about the different ways you can get pregnant, and I realized that was no education."

She was also called a baby killer when she volunteered for Planned Parenthood. "These protesters thought I was going to abort my child or something," she said.

"I've never had sex, but they thought I was going to abort my child."

Many people told her she was going to hell. She went through the difficult, soul-searching process of questioning her beliefs. But she's not merely still standing. She's thriving.

"The Education of Shelby Knox" chronicles a teenager's path to adulthood, consciousness and political awakening. It's the story of a family that remains very close and mutually supportive despite vast political and ideological differences. Most of all, it's a story about becoming your own person, even when that means going against everything you've been taught. Or, in this case, everything you weren't taught.

"Education," which will kick off the new season of the PBS doc series "POV" on June 21, begins with a series of bracing facts. Lubbock has one of the highest teen-pregnancy and sexually

transmitted disease rates in the nation. Teenage gonorrhea rates are twice the national average.

"Lubbock is known for three things," Knox said. "Buddy Holly, the Dixie Chicks and STDs."

This reputation is what got Knox interested in the sex education issue, first as a member of the Lubbock Youth Council, which works with city government, and then on her own. It's also what drew the attention of New York-based filmmakers Marion Lipschutz and Rose Rosenblatt, who were looking for a sex education story for their next film. They didn't go to Lubbock looking for Shelby, but once they found her, they knew they had an ideal protagonist.



ERICH SCHLEGEL/KRT CAMPUS

"The Education of Shelby Knox," screened at the Sundance festival, chronicles changes in the Texas native's beliefs about sex education.

ROGUE

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independent record label monolith Sub Pop and launched the underground buzz that has led to their national tour and stopover in

Columbia. While its only release, "Out of the Shadow," was initially pressed by a smaller label, it was kingmaker Sub Pop (which should be remembered as guiding the early career of Nirvana) that ultimately paved the way for a bigger audience for Rogue Wave's unique sound.

Fans of well-crafted, guitar-driven folk should rejoice at an opportunity to see Rogue Wave without having to buy a plane ticket to the West Coast. Doors open at 8 p.m. The show is \$7 for all ages.

Comments on this story? E-mail gamecockfeatures@gwm.sc.edu

DVD Releases for the week of February 8



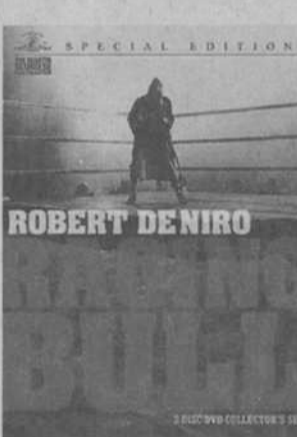
"Before Sunset"



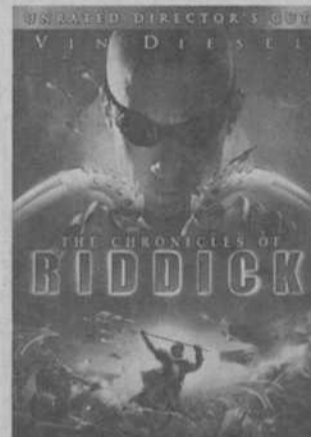
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