

'Hall Pass' feels like detention



BY KEN DUSOLD
Staff Reviewer

It quickly becomes obvious a person is watching a cinematic atrocity when the annoying conversations and ignorant commentary from loud-mouthed jerks filling the theater don't inhibit the experience of the movie. The Farrelly Brothers's newest film, "Hall Pass," is only bettered by the wise-crack utterances of rude theatergoers, the ringing of cell phones and the giggling whispers of girls discussing whether "she so did" or "did not" kiss that football player at the party the other night.

"Hall Pass" serves as nothing but a vehicle for Bobby and Peter Farrelly's toilet humor-based script to achieve fruition. Along for the excruciating and sometimes overtly sexist ride are Owen Wilson and Jason Sudeikis as Rick and Fred — two married men approaching middle age but hung up on immature antics. Rick is married to Maggie (Jenna Fischer), who must juggle three children while maintaining a house and marriage by herself. Fred is childless and married to Grace (Christina Applegate), a no-nonsense woman who is fully aware that her dud of a mate uses intricately-devised, but not-so-covert ways to look at other women's derrieres.

Sick of their husbands' cravings for sex and objectification of young women, the wives decide to take an extreme course of action: seeking the advice of their friend, Dr. Lucy (Joy Behar). Lucy tells Mag-



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Rick (Owen Wilson) and Fred (Jason Sudeikis) play two immature married men given a week of bachelorhood by their dissatisfied wives.

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gie and Grace the way to "fix" their marriages is to give the misbehaving hubbies a week off from marriage, or a "hall pass," in which they may act out all their transgressions and end up grateful and mature. The idea of marriage advice coming from the acting-impaired Behar being even remotely believable is a notable low point in the history of film.

For the rest of the movie, we are forced to watch Rick and Fred get high on a golf course while their equally stoned friends swim fully clothed in a

pond. Their friends then defecate in a sand-trap, sleep through an entire day, play games at an arcade and continuously make lewd comments about the breasts, butts and "lady-parts" of attractive passers-by while their lovely wives are swept off their feet by college guys at Cape Cod. Despite the intent of the experiment to be for the guys to realize they have no chance of winning over beautiful co-eds, the wives mess around with other men themselves. This would be fair play if Fischer and Applegate weren't gorgeous with no trouble picking up men, whereas Wilson and Sudeikis are left desperate with their flabby beer guts. Where is the humor?

Fischer (Truman class of 1995) is a proven comedian with her turn on NBC's "The Office," but without any funny material

with which to work, her cute and comforting personality can't shoulder the weight of a pathetic project like "Hall Pass."

Like Fischer, Wilson and Applegate have evidence to support their comedic resumes. Sadly, their latest characters are depressingly unfunny, unlikeable and expected to recite the gutter-worthy tripe made available in the script. Sudeikis, following appearances in last year's romantic-comedy stinkers "Going the Distance" and "The Bounty Hunter," adds more filth to his filmography. Perhaps Sudeikis would be better sticking with television's "Saturday Night Live" and a recurring role in "30 Rock."

One brief cameo by Richard Jenkins as a sensei of "booty calls" is about the only humorous occurrence in the film. As an ac-

tor, Jenkins has a habit of giving good performances in bad films. This suggests a noble venture on Jenkins' part to save not only the characters, but the entire film. Alas, such professional kindness is useless in "Hall Pass."

The most damage inflicted upon careers and reputations is done to the Farrelly Brothers. In 1998, the siblings achieved cult-status success with the very original and hilarious "There's Something About Mary." In 13 years, they have directed nine films and each attempt has failed to come within eyesight of their greatest work. With "Hall Pass," in which almost any laugh present during a viewing is sure to be directed at the obscene manure that is the film rather than anything contained within it, this Hollywood duo remains a couple of one-hit wonders.

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