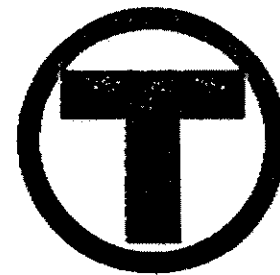


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BOSTON HERALD

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Is 16 that sweet in the '90s?

TEEN **RAP**

Teen girls say documentary depicts pressures they face

BY MOIRA DOWNES

In the world of Hollywood movies, most teen-agers are portrayed as jocks, nerds or sex symbols.

But a documentary that opened this past weekend at the Museum of Fine Arts introduces viewers to a whole different perception of what it's like to be 16 years old in the 1990s.

"Talk 16," directed by Janis Jundman and Adrienne Mitchell, traces the lives of five 16-year-old girls for one year and offers a glimpse into the tumultuous, emotional and often dark side of adolescence.

The five girls featured in the film were chosen to represent different walks of life — Lina, an underachiever determined to find a boyfriend; Helen, a Christian who excels academically; Astra, a rebellious street punk; Erin, a privileged pri-

vate-school student; and Rhonda, an aspiring actress.

Five area teens watched the film to see how accurately it reflected *their* teen experiences.

"I think it was a little extreme," said Miranda Stamp, 16, of Newton. "The girls in the film were definitely not average, but they weren't actors, and that's what made it a good film.

"It's hard to portray 16-year-old girls, though," she said. "I saw that the film tried to touch on issues like AIDS, sex, alcohol and boyfriends. They talked about the things that we talk about."

Stamp worried that adults might not be able to see beyond the girls' pitfalls.

"If some adult saw this film, and didn't know a lot about teen-agers, they'd probably think this was representative," Stamp said.

"But I guess it could be an eye-opener for some teens. It shows the problems we have, like dropping out of school, pregnancy, eating disorders."

Tiffany Edwards, 16, of Somerville, thought the film was on target.

"All the people are real, but they're still characters," she said. "I identified with Rhonda. She reminds me of me. We have a lot of the same problems."

Shontielle Williams of Dorchester said although the filmmakers probably interfered with the girls' lives, it most likely painted an accurate picture.

"I wouldn't like anyone following me around for a year," she said. "That would bother me. But I thought they did a good job with this film. It seemed like the girls got used to the cameras."

Tyeisha Drayden, a Dor-

chester teen, said the film showed how even teens from widely different backgrounds can find common ground.

"We all worry about the same things," she said. "And the girl who had the most faith in herself — Helen — was the one who was living the best life."

Maria Menounos, 16, of Medford also was impressed with the film.

"That's what goes on today," she said. "I know there were extremes, but a lot of people go through the things these girls were going through."

Menounos said the subjects seemed older than 16, but she could still relate.

"Astra spoke like she was 20, but acted like she was 3. I know there's people out there like her, but you don't come across them very often," she said.

Menounos said the documentary could be beneficial for adults to watch.

"It shows that we have problems, and why we have them," she said. "All teens go through some troubles."