THE EDUCATION OF
SHELBY KNOX
Sex, Lies & Education

a documentary by
MARION LIPSCUTZ &
ROSE ROSENBLATT

Life in Lubbock, Texas taught me two things: One is that God loves you and you’re going to burn in hell. The other is that sex is the most awful, filthy thing on earth and you should save it for someone you love.

—Butch Hancock,
The Flatlanders Band

edited by ROSE ROSENBLATT & JEREMY STULBERG

photography by GARY GRIFFIN

music by RICK BAITZ

lyrics and original songs by BARBARA JACOBS
THE HANDCUFFS & THE ISLES

OFFICIAL SELECTION
Sundance, South by Southwest, Hot Docs, Full Frame, Miami Gay and Lesbian Film Festivals 2005

WINNER
Excellence in Cinematography, Documentary Sundance Film Festival 2005
Critical Acclaim for “The Education of Shelby Knox”

“Shelby Knox is a brave, smart, independent high-school-age crusader for sex education in Lubbock, Texas … The movie … is a pungent civics lesson on what can and cannot be accomplished by one plucky, idealistic girl.”


 “[The film’s] intriguing chronicle of one girl’s coming to consciousness makes the once-stock drama of ideological conversion seem both more commonplace and more astounding than ever.”

Virginia Heffernan, The New York Times

“For an account of our current wars, turn to The Education of Shelby Knox, which follows a spirited, attention-loving 15-year-old high-school crusader in Lubbock, Texas—a town where teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases are soaring far above the national average—who takes up the fight for sex education in the local schools, where only abstinence is allowed to be taught. Shelby's main antagonist, the local pastor Ed Ainsworth, tours the state preaching abstinence and openly declares his hostility to the notion of "tolerance" in any form. Indeed, he proudly declares that Christianity is the least tolerant of religions, which raises the feisty Shelby's hackles. Liberal denizens of big-city America may find this trip deep into the heart of Texas both eye-opening and very depressing.”

David Ansen, Newsweek.com

“If ever there was a documentary about morality and values that could appeal to both ‘red’ and ‘blue’ state Americans, this is it. What is perhaps most striking about The Education of Shelby Knox is its honest, humane and respectful point of view.”

Chris Herlinger, Religion News Service

“Fascinating…. Shelby, run for president in 20 years, please!”

Leslie Robarge, Glamour

“Filmmakers smoothly structure material into an involving coming-of-age narrative… pic impresses as balanced and truthful.”

Joe Leydon, Variety

“In an age of frequently hostile red state-blue state divisions, the Knoxes could teach us all a thing or two about family values.”

Chris Vognar, Dallas Morning News

“Compelling.”

Lisa Kennedy, Denver Post

“The Education of Shelby Knox is what growing up should look like.”

Susan Reimer, The Baltimore Sun

“Wherever Shelby’s fearlessness comes from, it’s a thing to behold.”

Geoff Pevere, Toronto Star

“Sparkling… a fully realized coming-of-age documentary in which Shelby grows from refreshingly naïve teenage to dynamic activist.”

Michael Janusonis, The Providence Journal

“The success of The Education of Shelby Knox … lies in the ability of co-directors Marion Lipschutz and Rose Rosenblatt to lay bare the emotions and logic driving the national sex education fight, rather than preach about policy.”

Paul McMorrow, Boston’s Weekly Dig

“The film has it all – tears, cheers, arguments, hugs and plenty of emotion.”

Ray Glass, Lubbock Avalanche-Journal
‘Education of Shelby Knox’

PARK CITY — Because the film concerns a controversy over sex education in schools, one initially misreads the title of Marion Lipschutz and Rose Rosenblatt’s amazing documentary “The Education of Shelby Knox.” The education here is political. A naive newcomer to the process gets caught up in political activity, learns some harsh realities, encounters duplicity and narrow-mindedness, yet far from becoming discouraged — through the film is a sure winner for the festival circuit and could easily win theatrical exposure as well.

Lipschutz and Rosenblatt hit pure gold when they elected to follow the nascent political career of Shelby Knox, a 15-year-old high school sophomore and conservative Southern Baptist, in 2001. How did they know? The God-fearing daughter of conservative Republicans in Lubbock, Texas — George W. Bush territory with a vengeance — she cites as her priorities the family creed: “God, family, country, in that order.”

She willingly and gratefully undergoes a celibacy ceremony, led by charismatic local the Rev. Ed Ainsworth, in which she pledges sexual abstinence until her wedding night. She’s a bright girl who is deeply troubled by the fact that no sex education is taught in public schools yet rates of teen pregnancy and STDs in Lubbock are among the highest in the nation.

Knox joins the Youth Commission, fully funded by city government to give young people a voice, and campaigns for comprehensive sex education in its schools. During the next three years, she finds herself in conflict not only with Ainsworth and the school board but with a fellow Youth Commission member, Corey Nichols. When Nichols is elected “mayor” of the commission, beating out Knox, the young woman is reduced to tears. But she continues to work with him.

The two are diametric opposites politically: Nichols is a diplomat and compromiser who tries to find common ground with opponents. Knox is an activist, unwilling and unable to compromise. See “EDUCATION” on page 2.

‘Education’
Continued from page 18—

Her parents express misgivings about their daughter’s activism, even suggesting at one point that she quit the commission. Yet they proudly frame her press clippings. When Knox allies herself with a group of gay and lesbian students, her parents are shocked but gradually come to understand.

What Knox is, in fact, is a ferociously independent creative thinker who asks the right questions and arrives at her opinion only after careful consideration of all sides of an issue. She is not one to embrace received opinions or blindly follow anything or anybody. As the movie puts it, “Everybody eventually becomes their own person.” Watching Knox on her journey of self-realization is an illuminating and deeply satisfying experience.

The film has occasional sound problems where dialogue gets a bit lost. But mostly the filmmaking is unobtrusive. All these wonderfully rich characters argue viewpoints and consider options with earnest emotions, each and every one having long forgotten about the existence of a camera crew.
An Avowed Virgin-Until-Marriage Turns Sex Ed Activist

What does it look like, in this time of reportedly unchangeable American minds, when someone becomes radicalized? Surely you remember those 20th-century transformations. The housewife who reads Kate Chopin and leaves her family. The dropout who hears Malcolm X and takes to the barricades. Does it even happen anymore?

"The Education of Shelby Knox," a documentary that appears tonight on PBS, says, modestly, yes - and offers as proof a case study in contemporary radicalization. Though the film, which is set in Lubbock, Tex., occasionally expresses smug approval of the salvation of a red-state soul, its intriguing chronicle of one girl's coming to consciousness makes the once-stock drama of ideological conversion seem both more commonplace and more astounding than ever.

No, Ms. Knox, a Christian high school student, does not join Students for a Democratic Society or the Black Panthers. An avowed virgin-until-marriage, she does not even go libertine. In fact, all she does is turn from a graduate of True Love Waits, the popular virginity-preservation program, to an activist in behalf of sex education and the separation of church and school. But to make this change, she must defy her parents, her pastor and the school board. All of this civil disobedience is as hard as it ever was.

The film opens on some teenagers in a parking lot at night in Lubbock, dilating on that great parking-lot topic: how boring their town is. One does a doughnut in a white car that looks like a Trans Am. Another moons the camera. Helpfully, a girl explains that "the only thing there is to do in Lubbock is have sex."

Cut to Ms. Knox, 15, sweet-faced with dark curls. She talks about sex in an endearing way, using a pretext of innocence to introduce double-entendres and wide-eyed gaffes. She also says that, though she's never had sex, she has "interviewed a lot of people about sex." The reasons for it still seem to baffle her.

Interviewed? Yes. As part of the Lubbock Youth Commission, a group of civic-minded students empowered by the town's mayor, Ms. Knox conducts man-on-the-street interviews to highlight the paradox of her "abstinence-only" school: teachers tell students simply not to have sex, but the school's rates of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases are among the nation's highest.

Ms. Knox and her fellow travelers seek to institute more thorough sex education in the town's public schools. Without it, they contend that the students' sole source of information is "Sex Ed," a fact-challenged, hail-fellow pastor named Ed Ainsworth who brings to mind Joe Simpson, the minister father of the pop stars Jessica and Ashlee. He happens to be the most compelling figure in the film.

He's the one who oversaw Ms. Knox's sexual-purity pledge to her parents ("On my wedding night, that night will be my first time"), as well as those of other young people in Lubbock, and he has a slightly leering, unctuous, overfamiliar manner with the local teens.

A perfect antagonist for the righteous sweetheart Ms. Knox, Mr. Ainsworth begins a typical sermon this way: "Listen, young people. The first time I ever had sex in my life was when I was 20 years old. It was in Austin, Tex., at the Hilton Hotel, at 11:30 at night, in room 1158. That's right. You say, 'Ew, that's T.M.I. - too much information.' Well, I don't think so. Because it was on July 15, 1978. I celebrate it every year. It's my wedding anniversary."

Ms. Knox has another foil, which keeps the program interesting. He's Corey Nichols, the chief of the Youth Commission who beat Ms. Knox for the office. He is an operator, a sycophant to power, a natural politician. As Ms. Knox becomes increasingly emotional on the subject of sex ed - she plays that emotionalism for all it's worth on local radio and television - Mr. Nichols recognizes that the school board will never give up its abstinence-only policy, and he decides to cut the group's losses and focus on other issues.

Incensed, Ms. Knox takes up with another, even more marginalized group: the gay students who are suing the Lubbock School Board. Calling Mr. Nichols a sellout, she quits the Youth Commission and declares herself a liberal Democrat. This, she expects, will be the last straw for her parents, conservative Republicans who have been forbearing, though nervous, about their daughter's shift in priorities.
(They do seem wowed by the media attention she receives as well as - no doubt - the documentary cameras.) Indeed, her mother, stressing that Ms. Knox seems thinner since leaving the Youth Commission, is chagrinned by her daughter's new enthusiasm for gays and liberalism. But she doesn't stop her. Eventually, they march together to protest homophobia.

It's not entirely clear at what point the filmmakers Marion Lipschutz and Rose Rosenblatt, New Yorkers who treat Lubbock as though it were a far-off, brightly lighted planet (the camera dwells on curiosities like a stitched pillow that reads "I believe in angels"), became aware of Ms. Knox's political convictions. Or how much they, just by having cameras around, encouraged her radicalization. But the film begins with an epigraph - attributed to the songwriter Butch Hancock - that hints at the skepticism with which the filmmakers approach the documentary's setting. It's a bit arrogant, and may make viewers who appreciate the psychological dimensions of Ms. Knox's story wish to see, for contrast, the story of a New England liberal teenager who spites her parents by becoming born-again.

But it's still kind of funny.

"Life in Lubbock, Texas," the epigraph goes, "taught me two things: one is that God loves you and you're going to burn in hell; the other is that sex is the most awful, filthy thing on Earth and you should save it for someone you love."

**Point of View: The Education of Shelby Knox**

PBS, tonight at 10; check local listings.

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**Dorothy Rabinowitz, The Wall Street Journal, June 17, 2005**

**TV Review**

Another Christian traveler seeking enlightenment -- this one self-appointed -- is the subject of "POV"'s "The Education of Shelby Knox" (Tuesday, 10-11 p.m. EDT on PBS; check local listings). Fifteen-year-old Shelby began a high-school crusade for serious sex education in the Lubbock, Texas, public schools -- a no-win battle since Texas law has, since 1995, mandated abstinence-only sex education. Committed herself to an abstinence-only vow, Ms. Knox stubbornly pursued her campaign, inspired, we learn, by the high rate of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases she saw around her. Young Ms. Knox, who is given to frequent bouts of tears -- as when she lost a class election, other times for reasons more mysterious -- nevertheless manages to develop a certain backbone in the course of her struggles for justice.

The film begins with the memorable quote attributed to singer-songwriter Butch Hancock of the Flatlanders: "Life in Lubbock, Texas, taught me two things. One is that God loves you -- and you're going to burn in hell. The other is that sex is the most awful filthy thing on earth and you should save it for someone you love."

Savor that. There won't be anything else by way of civilizing irony to dilute the profound, grinding earnestness that weighs this work down -- and raises suspicions that documentaries about principled high-schoolers at odds with repressive authority are likely to be exceedingly solemn and focused on heroes given to impressive levels of self-absorption. The last count, of course, can always be dismissed as the natural condition of the young, which doesn't make lengthy exposure to it any easier to take.
School of Hard Knox

At 15, Shelby Knox, a Southern Baptist girl from Lubbock, Texas, donned a promise ring as a symbol of sexual purity until marriage. Living in a county where 1 in 23 female teens becomes pregnant, she then spent the next two years fighting the school board in an effort to replace an abstinence-only sex-ed curriculum with a comprehensive one teaching contraception. The Education of Shelby Knox, a Sundance award-winner tracing her transformation, airs June 21 on PBS’s P.O.V. Now 18, Knox is a rising junior at the University of Texas–Austin.

What’s wrong with abstinence-only sex ed?
Abstinence is the only 100 percent effective way to prevent STIs [sexually transmitted infections] and pregnancy. The problem is when kids who take abstinence pledges break their pledge, they don’t have much [sex] education. So those pledges are really very dangerous.

What was your school sex ed like?
Ed Ainsworth [pastor and local leader of a Christian abstinence program] comes in your seventh-, eighth-, and ninth-grade year and before the junior and senior prom and tells you condoms don’t work, and if you have sex your life is over. We also have health classes where we’re shown advanced stages of sexually transmitted disease but aren’t told how they can be prevented or cured. It’s all scare tactics.

Why so much controversy over sex ed?
A lot of parents think, “If my kid goes to church, they’re not having sex.” In reality, a lot of kids have sex in junior high and high school.

Do you still wear your promise ring?
Are you asking me if I’ve had sex yet?
No.
Well, I have not, but that is because I have not found the person I want to have sex with. It’s not that I won’t wait until marriage, I just don’t know.

And your ring?
The ring got stolen. If I still had it, I would not wear it.

Did you face fallout for your activism?
A Spanish teacher called me a baby killer—evidently abortion and sex education are synonymous in her mind. The school board wrote my principal saying I was causing problems. And once someone broke my windows on my car at school. People at my church told me I was on the path to hell.

What did you say to them?
Thanks very much for your input, but I think I’ll let God decide. —Caroline Hsu.
'P.O.V.' Spotlights Sex Education Dilemma

LOS ANGELES (AP) -- "AIDS IS GOD'S CURSE." A child, no more than 9 years old, holds the banner high during an anti-gay rally in Lubbock, Texas. On the other side of the street, gay students protest the school board denying them the right to organize on campus.

Their cause draws legal support, media coverage and an unlikely ally in Shelby Knox, a conservative Christian teenager and warrior princess for comprehensive -- as opposed to abstinence-only -- sex education.

Not even she could have dreamed her battle would lead her to this place.

"The thing Shelby understood very clearly was how the fight she was waging for comprehensive sex education had to include them," says New York filmmaker Marion Lipschutz, who captured this watershed moment for "The Education of Shelby Knox," airing 10 p.m. EDT Tuesday on the PBS documentary series "P.O.V."

"Not everybody sees the interconnection in sex education and gay rights. Shelby did," says Lipschutz, "and (she) felt it was very important to have that in the film because she understood this film is also getting a message out there."

Originally, Knox wasn't supposed to be at the center of the story.

"We started out to do the story about sex education in a town where kids were advocating to get better sex education," says Lipschutz's creative partner, Rose Rosenblatt. "Shelby emerged as the dominant character. As we followed her more and more, it became the story of fighting for sex ed through the point of view of this young girl."

Knox was a high school sophomore in 2001 when she joined the Lubbock Youth Commission, a group of 35 high school students empowered by the mayor to give Lubbock teens a voice in city government.

The commission lobbied fervently for comprehensive sex education in schools. Although the area's high schools teach abstinence-only sex education, Lubbock has some of the highest rates of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases in the country.

"I knew people who had STDs. I knew people who had fathered children," says Knox, "and the more I asked about it, they'd say things like, 'We thought you couldn't get pregnant the first time.' It was happening in our very own schools. I thought it was something that I could use my voice to try and change."

Easier said than done.

"Five-to-one I get positive letters over negative -- I'm having huge success," says Ed Ainsworth, youth pastor for Faith Christian Family Church in Lubbock, an abstinence educator who gives seminars, sans religious doctrine, throughout Texas high schools. "Abstinence will protect your heart, your mind, your emotions and your body."
As the culture wars were waged on the outside, Shelby's increasingly liberal views -- and the stress she was putting on herself -- made things contentious at home.

"For the first time, it was less important to her what we said or what we felt, she was just so passionate about the issue," says Shelby's mother, Paula Knox, from the family's home in Lubbock.

The Youth Commission was eventually disbanded, with the city's budget shortfall blamed for its demise.

"Ultimately it was their advocacy and their action ... that led to its demise," says Eric Benson, former Youth Commission adviser who has worked in STD prevention for nearly a decade.

He contends that "as a society, we have some serious hang-ups about sex. We're both fascinated with it and afraid of it. We're in an incredible amount of denial. It's obvious that sexual abstinence is not a realistic choice for many of our youth. Shouldn't we be meeting those kids where they're at and helping them to take steps toward safety?"

This year, President Bush has earmarked $167 million for abstinence-only education, and his proposed 2006 budget will see an increase of $206 million for such programs.

Meanwhile, schools opting for comprehensive sex education have to pay for those programs from their general budget, provided by local and state governments.

"There's been a bill presented in the Senate," Knox offers, "called the Responsible Education About Life Act to match funding for comprehensive sex education so school districts can choose abstinence only or comprehensive and get the same funding."

Now 18, Knox is a sophomore at the University of Texas in Austin. A self-described liberal Democrat and future presidential hopeful, she was raised Southern Baptist but has no current affiliation with any religious denomination. However, she still adheres to a "purity pledge" she took at 15 vowing to abstain from sex until she marries.

"The artistic surprise of this film," notes Lipschutz, "was that we started out doing a fight over sex ed and as we were editing we saw that we didn't have that fight as much as we had Shelby's transformation, and specifically a religious, social transformation."

Knox maintains the film isn't about her, adding: "It's about an issue that is very important to the United States right now. I'm simply the face of that issue in this film."
The Education of Shelby Knox
Marion Lipschutz and Rose Rosenblatt.
*In Cite Pictures.* 76 minutes.
*Airs on PBS’s P.O.V. June 21.*
Lubbock, Texas, is the birthplace of Buddy Holly, a crucible of conservative Christianity, and a city with some of the highest rates of teen pregnancy and STDs in the country. But Lubbock, we learn from this stirring documentary, is also home to a remarkable teenager named Shelby Knox, who, in the course of filming, evolves from a compliant 15-year-old girl to a tough, compassionate young woman committed to social change.

Early in *The Education of Shelby Knox,* we watch Knox take a vow of “sexual purity” in front of her parents and her pastor. But she realizes that many of her classmates are sexually active and soon finds her calling: promoting comprehensive sex education in the “abstinence-only” Lubbock public schools. Her platform is a seat on the Lubbock Youth Commission, a city-funded group headed by her rival, a slick, budding politician named Corey Nichols. Directors Marion Lipschutz and Rose Rosenblatt follow Knox as she tangles with Nichols and takes on the town’s officials and religious leaders, challenging them with increasing fervor from the bedrock of her own Christian beliefs.

Knox also must deal with her loving but worried parents, and their family discussions are the emotional heart of the film. When Knox makes common cause with a group of gay and lesbian students—“I think God is a forgiving God,” she says—she further strains her most intimate relationships. But by then it’s clear nothing will stop Knox from struggling toward her own truths—and maybe taking some of the skeptics along with her. At one point, a new gay friend says joyfully, “If there were more Christians like you, we’d be in heaven.” To which one can only say: Amen.

—Julia M. Klein
Why We Watch

It's hard not to feel oddly removed from the world at Sundance. Park City, whose permanent residents number just over 7,000, is, after all, a resort town, its economy kept afloat by the moneyed migrants who visit each year. “We do most of our business for the year in these two weeks and Christmas,” a shopkeeper on Main Street told me. Despite the sense of island-in-the-snow enclosure, accentuated by a ring of mountains, this year’s festival displayed a gratifying number of outward-looking works in the documentary competition—films that tackled social issues at home, and, with the addition of the new World Documentary section, abroad.

The Education of Shelby Knox, a warm and accomplished piece by vet documentarians Marion Lipschutz and Rose Rosenblatt, is an argument for the continuing relevance of vérité filmmaking. A chronicle of the eponymous teenager’s struggle for comprehensive sex ed in the school system of her hometown, Lubbock, Texas, the film is most resonant as a coming-of-age story, as Shelby questions her Southern Baptist upbringing and becomes an outspoken liberal Christian feminist. Buoyed by Gary Griffin’s crisp cinematography and an engaging group of characters (including an apt villain in Ed Ainsworth, the abstinence evangelist who’s shades of Patrick Swayze in Donnie Darko), Shelby Knox provided more dramatic intrigue than any fiction film I saw at the festival. Its appeal hinges on Shelby herself: whip-smart, unafraid, and funny, she’s a winning protagonist. This portrait of her trials and triumphs is both a sensitive account of one woman’s story and a nuanced (and optimistic) vision of “red” America.
The Education of Shelby Knox

Most parents would probably consider Shelby Knox a dream teenager. She’s a top-drawer student who sings opera on the side while enjoying a close, loving relationship with both parents. She has no apparent interest in drugs or alcohol and is a devout member of her parents’ evangelical church. Even better from the point and view of most moms and dads: Shelby has taken a pledge of sexual abstinence prior to marriage.

No, Shelby Knox is not the latest addition to the cast of 7th Heaven, but a very real young lady. And just because she’s so well-behaved does not necessarily mean that her parents dwell in some kind of Promised Land of domestic tranquility.

No, the Knoxes dwell in the very unpromised land of Lubbock, Texas – birthplace of Buddy Holly and an alarming number of illegitimate children. In Shelby’s high school, pregnant coeds seem to be more common than A-students. So, working with the Lubbock Youth Commission, a group that is supposed to give young people a voice in local government, she champions an unlikely cause for a devout teen – overturning her local school board’s draconian “abstinence only” sex education policy.

On the counsel, she meet up with the one obstacle all activists encounter – other activists. In this case, her nemesis within the organization is Corey Nichols, the very model of a moderate-leaning GOP politician in training. Shelby instantly distrusts the suspiciously smooth Corey, fearing he is too ready to give in to the powers that be. There’s no doubt the kid already embodies the pathological slickness of most contemporary politicians. When asked about whether he plans to take up a career in politics, he refuses to answer. When pressed, he adds that it’s never good to announce a run for office prematurely.

And then there are Shelby’s ever-supportive parents. Like her, they are in favor of “comprehensive” sex education, which permits discussion of birth control and safer sex. Unlike Shelby, however, they are also otherwise fairly standard Texas-style conservative Republicans, and Daddy in particular would be just as happy if Shelby found a less controversial outlet for her energies.

When Shelby supports an attempt to install a Gay-Straight Alliance chapter on her high school campus, her parents’ ambivalence reaches new heights. And Shelby herself is struggling to reconcile the very particular version of Christianity she’s been taught – the only one she really knows about -- with the fact that she actually likes and respects gay people.

If you’re one of the army of downhearted liberals still distraught over the last election and the ongoing gutlessness of most of the Democratic Party, seeing The Education of Shelby Knox is a heartening experience. It’s not a perfect documentary – at times it feels as if the subjects are performing for the cameras and not too much actually happens. But overall it’s a well-made, often extremely funny coming of age tale of a real-life progressive activist thriving right in the heart of the reddest of red states.

Now attending the University of Texas at Austin, Shelby Knox is blessed with real determination and nerve. Like all teens, she may fall prey to the occasional hormonally inspired tantrum. That will end, but the young Ms. Knox understands something that too few adults grasp: the difference between compromising to achieve a partial goal, and simply abandoning those goals entirely.

Who knows, as she grows up and, I pray, enters politics, she may help restore the traditional values of tolerance to America.

And now, Film Threat’s first-ever political endorsement – Ms. Shelby Knox for President in 2030!
“…the American Excellence in Cinematography Award went to Amelia Vincent for ‘Hustle & Flow’ in the feature category, and to Gary Griffin for the doc ‘The Education of Shelby Knox’”

Roger Ebert, Chicago Sun-Times, January 31

“Of the doc protagonists who dare to go head to head with religious conservatives, the bubbly high school activist of *The Education of Shelby Knox* seems to apply her knowledge more effectively than the weary victim of priestly abuse whom we see hit bottom in *Twist of Faith*…Optimism may not be a privilege in every case, though a little humor rarely hurts one’s bid to fight the power…”

Rob Nelson, Village Voice, February 1

“Other noteworthy docs include… ‘The Education of Shelby Knox,’ which shows what happens when a conservative Lubbock, Texas, teenager's search for knowledge turns her into ‘The Sex Ed Girl.’”

Kenneth Turan, L.A. Times, January 19

“The Education of Shelby Knox,’ points its lens at a Lubbock teen who labors passionately to bring about sex education in the public schools. Knox is now a sophomore at UT-Austin.”

Marjorie Baumgarten, Austin Chronicle, February 4

“Both dramatic and documentary films are eligible for the American Excellence in Cinematography Award which honors exceptional photography. In the documentary arena, Gary Griffin received the award for his work on *The Education of Shelby Knox*, which chronicles a 15-year-old girl’s transformation from conservative Southern Baptist to liberal Christian and ardent feminist as she fights for sex education and gay rights in Lubbock, Texas.”

Andrea Meyer, Sundance Daily Insider, January 30

“‘The Education of Shelby Knox,’ points its lens at a Lubbock teen who labors passionately to bring about sex education in the public schools. Knox is now a sophomore at UT-Austin.”

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“Expanding Reality

“There's a sense of unlimited possibilities, there's more than just television,” says Marion Lipschutz, who co-directed competition entry “The Education of Shelby Knox.”

A five-year project, the doc wraps the abstract issue of sex education around the very personal story of Texan Shelby Knox and her parents. Already slated for a “P.O.V.” airdate on PBS, Lipschutz and co-helmer Rose Rosenblatt now also have additional distribution options to consider, including Internet-promoted DVD distribution and an arthouse versus broader theatrical release…”

Kathy McDonald, Variety, January 18

“For excellence in cinematography, Gary Griffin was honored with an award for the doc ‘The Education of Shelby Knox’”

Eugene Hernandez, IndieWire, January 29

“The American Excellence in Cinematography Award went to Amelia Vincent for ‘Hustle & Flow’ in the feature category, and to Gary Griffin for the doc ‘The Education of Shelby Knox’”

Eugene Hernandez, IndieWire, January 29
For more press clips or further information on “The Education Of Shelby Knox” please contact:

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