



Advice for OITM, Embrace Your Fabulous Adolescent Ambiguity

Coming of age in America is a fluid process defined not by chronological age but more by the inner rite of passage that entails rebelling against authority, defining ones self, and in the Hollywood version there is always a love interest. From *The Breakfast Club* to *The Incredible Adventures of Two Girls in Love* films reinforce for us how this journey towards becoming ourselves is both about defining ourselves, as well as defining others.

I can remember being thirteen like it was yesterday. I was getting ready for high school and I watched coming of age movies and TV shows like I was studying for an exam. *Pretty in Pink*, *Some Kind of Wonderful*, *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*... anything to teach me what it would take to be "cool" and not the "loser" or "geek." I watched these movies until I could define all of the roles of high

school from "nerd" to "jock." As the beginning of high school approached, I got worried. All of these roles were enthralling,

volleyball, listening to punk music and having a good time. Whenever anyone tried to pigeon hole me into one category,

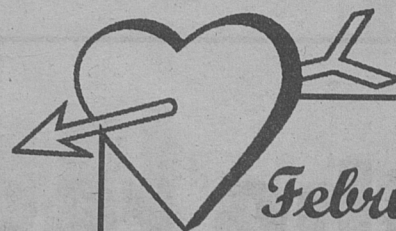
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Not being able to define myself, I did what all good teenagers do. I rebelled, not against my folks, but against the labels. An androgynous ninth grader, getting all A's, playing

ry; I would laugh and then do something to contradict them.

My polonious advice to OITM on its thirteenth birthday...don't rush to define yourself as an adult. Embrace the ambiguity and diversity present in the population you serve. And of course, be a good teenager, and rebel. ▼



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