

# Honor Society Highlights The Humor In College Admissions



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The new Paramount+ film depicts the competition (and comedy) in applying to attend college.

By Carrie Berk

This summer featured several YA streaming service successes. Paramount+ is adding a new coming-of-age comedy to their roster, starring *Stranger Things*' **Gaten Matarazzo**.

Honor Society exclusively premieres on **Paramount+** July 29.

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## Race to recommendation



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Angourie Rice as Honor Rose

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*Honor Society* follows high-school senior Honor (**Angourie Rice**), whose plans to get into Harvard are challenged by three students who also have top grades. To gain a glowing recommendation letter from her guidance counselor, Mr. Calvin (**Christopher Mintz-Plasse**), she must defeat her fellow students, including her biggest competition, Michael (Gaten Matarazzo).

## Type A



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Angourie Rice as Honor Rose

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The movie establishes its title character as Type A from the start, as she moves through a meticulous morning routine: whitening strips, yoga, a jade roller, hair straightening, and painting her nails. Honor is the editor-in-chief of her school newspaper, captain of the volleyball team, founder of a food bank and her school's karate club.

## The competition



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Armani Jackson as Travis Biggins

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To throw her Harvard competition off her game, she devises a plan to take out the other three top students at her school: break up Travis and his girlfriend, occupy Kennedy's time with a school production of her play, and seduce Michael. "Sometimes, life gives you lemons," Honor says when all goes according to plan. "And sometimes, life hands you a lemonade with a really cute umbrella sticking out of it and a mini biscotti on the side. No charge."

### Catching feelings



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Gaten Matarazzo as Michael Dipnicky and Angourie Rice as Honor Rose.

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Honor's plan goes awry when she catches feelings for Michael. Michael appears to understand her: both share a desire to leave their town, go to college, and start a new life. In one scene, Michael tells Honor that as a foster kid, he used to take a particular route home from school and pretend his parents were still alive, living on that street and waiting for him to come home.

He takes Honor by the hand as they break into a house, running through the halls, stealing drinks from the fridge, and even sharing a kiss. What Honor doesn't realize is that Michael is more like her than she assumes. After all, he's just as eager to go to Harvard.

### Foiled plan



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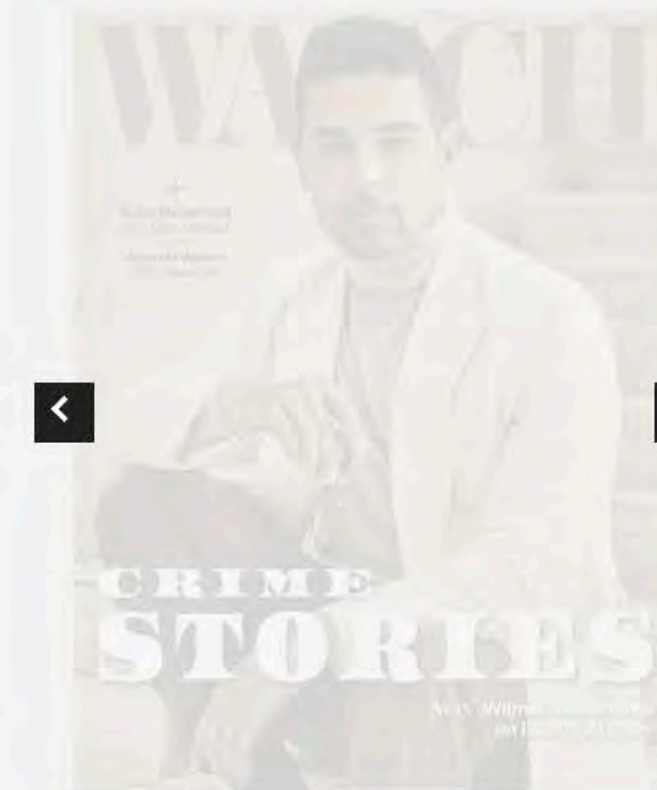


Angourie Rice as Honor Rose, Amy Keum as Kennedy Smith and Zoe Christie-Dowd as Grace.

Photo: Michael Courtney/Nickelodeon/Paramount+©2022 Viacom International Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Honor's mission is further diverted when she begins to connect with the other top students. She sympathizes with Travis, who finally begins to embrace his sexuality, and Kennedy, whose passion for playwriting is getting a chance to shine. Honor feels guilty; her peers are no longer pawns in a plan to get into college, but her friends.

### Fitting in



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Angourie Rice as Honor Rose, Kelcey Mawema as Talia, and Avery Konrad as Emma.

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Underneath Honor’s perfect exterior is just a desire to fit in. The posters of Beyoncé and Billie Eilish on her wall are a facade. She says, “These are the g-ds of my people, so either I worship them, or I’m an outcast.” The pictures on her social media are also fake, so that people will “envy” her.

She compares her life to Offred in *The Handmaid's Tale*—to survive, she “hide[s] within [herself].” The difference between Honor and her favorite book: she has control over her fate and is confident she will break free of her town. “High school is about one thing: getting out of high school,” she maintains. Honor eventually realizes that it may not be high school she is trying to escape, but herself.

### Coming of age



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Avery Konrad as Emma, Kelcey Mawema as Tailia and Angourie Rice as Honor Rose

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The comedy explores the complexities of love, education and coming of age in a modern world. It follows in the footsteps of previous YA streaming service hits, including *To All the Boys I've Loved Before*, *Never Have I Ever*, and *The Summer I Turned Pretty*.



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## Gaten Matarazzo



Gaten Matarazzo as Michael Dipnicky

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The film features Gaten Matarazzo, who currently stars in Season 4 of *Stranger Things* on Netflix. Matarazzo also hosts hidden-camera reality series *Prank Encounters*, and he returns to the Broadway stage as Jared in *Dear Evan Hansen* this month.

## Angourie Rice



Angourie Rice as Honor Rose



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Matarazzo stars alongside Angourie Rice, an Australian actress whose film career spans across several genres. She has appeared in *Spider-Man: Far from Home*, *The Nice Guys*, *The Beguiled*, *Every Day* and more. Most recently, Rice played young Rebel Wilson in the Netflix comedy, *Senior Year*.

## Christopher Mintz-Plasse



Christopher Mintz-Plasse as Mr. Calvin



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Christopher Mintz-Plasse (*Promising Young Woman*) plays Mr. Calvin, the eccentric guidance counselor who sings and strums a guitar mid-meeting with Honor. Mr. Calvin also has a crush on Honor, much to her discomfort. Kerry Butler (*Xanadu* on Broadway) stars as Honor's mother, Janet, who thinks "bread is love" and always has a new recipe cooking in the oven.

Honor Society exclusively premieres on Paramount+ July 29 in the U.S., Canada, Australia and the U.K., and later this year in Latin America, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Austria and France.

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