

Review – “My Oxford Year”

Romantic movie warms viewers' hearts

Cheyenne Luebbe

One year in a new country. One year to fall in love. One year for her life to change. This is the premise behind the movie “My Oxford Year,” released on Aug. 1, 2025, on Netflix. The movie, which is based on Julia Whelan’s novel of the same name, is an experience that slowly moved my heart. There are high expectations when a book is adapted into a movie, but “My Oxford Year” perfected the enemies-to-lovers trope. As a fan of romance novels and movies, I would highly recommend “My Oxford Year” to anyone who enjoys a moving, heartfelt romance.



Junior Cheyenne Luebbe watches “My Oxford Year” in her at-home movie theater. The protagonist, portrayed by Sofia Carson, has starred in at least six other movies on Netflix. (Courtesy Photo)

The movie starts with the protagonist, 24-year-old Anna De La Vega, an ambitious American student from Queens, New York, played by Sofia Carson, arriving in Oxford, England, to study abroad for a year. After arriving, Anna is excited for a new year of her life to begin, but she meets a local who ruins her clothes and her first day at Oxford by driving over a puddle. She later finds out that the local who almost ran her over is the professor subbing in her literature class. Because of their accidental encounter, their relationship gets off to a rocky start. As Anna and her professor, Jamie Davenport, played by Corey Mylchreest, grow closer, a romantic connection builds between them. Anna and Jamie decide not to have a serious relationship because Anna is only there for a year. But as they open up to one another, they start to fall in love. However, a life-altering secret could change their love and lives for the one and maybe only year they have together.

One of the things I enjoyed while watching “My Oxford Year” was the scenery in Oxford that creates a romantic and historic setting. In the movie, the university’s ancient architecture and picturesque spots, like the Duke Humfrey’s Library, the oldest reading room in the Bodleian Library, create a backdrop that is both timeless and visually stunning. By showcasing iconic and beautiful locations such as Magdalen College, the setting blends the glory of history with intimate moments of romance. The contrast between the university’s old buildings, which date back over 900 years, and the young characters emphasize the timeless nature of love and life within the university’s historic walls.

Amid all the visual beauty, I found myself drawn to the characters because of how they developed and changed throughout the movie. In “My Oxford Year,” the main characters, Anna and Jamie, weren’t two-dimensional. One of the ways Jamie’s character changes is that while falling in love with Anna, he becomes more emotionally open after she discovers the truth. Similarly, Anna also changes through her relationship with Jamie, letting go of her checklist and learning to live more spontaneously. Because of the way they developed and changed in their relationship, I felt a genuine connection to Anna and Jamie, as if they were real people.

Above all, my favorite part of the movie was the romance between Anna and Jamie. First of all, Carson and Mylchreest's on-screen chemistry made the romance between Anna and Jamie feel effortless. After their unexpected first encounter and Anna's shocked reaction to Jamie being her professor, the tension between them is undeniable. Although they got off on the wrong foot and Jamie is Anna's teacher, they can't ignore the mutual attraction between them. What starts as a "just fun" casual relationship grows into a romantic connection and true love. Despite challenges Anna and Jamie face, they confess their love for each other. Anna and Jamie's relationship reveals a deeper meaning of the key theme that love rises above challenges. This was heartwarming because, despite the hardships we face in life, we don't have to go through them alone. After all, we will always be surrounded by people who love us.

While the movie was done well, my one critique is that the storyline and plot were somewhat predictable. The movie used many common romance tropes, including enemies-to-lovers, a meet-cute, two characters trying to make each other jealous and the characters' initial plans being disrupted. Additionally, the progression from initial dislike to a whirlwind romance followed a predictable pattern similar to other romance movies. Lastly, there were some moments in the movie where I could anticipate what was coming next in the plot. Even though it was predictable; however, the storyline of "My Oxford Year" was different and unique from other romance movies. It used different themes to hint at hidden meanings, which makes it one of the best movies I've seen.

All in all, "My Oxford Year" was definitely worth watching. It is more than just a romcom—it is a moving, heartfelt movie where viewers can connect with the setting, characters and romance. Even though some parts of the movie are predictable, the storyline does relate to real life and how one year can change everything. Every moment in the movie highlights a deeper meaning that love can overcome anything. If you're looking for more than just a love story that will make you smile, "My Oxford Year" is a true representation of what true love looks like and what real life is. Although the ending is not perfect, real life is not perfect either.



Junior Cheyenne Luebbe reads the novel "My Oxford Year" by Julia Whelan in her reading nook. Whelan has written at least three other books and is also an American actress, screenwriter and narrator. (Courtesy Photo)