

MOXIE



Young Adult

By Jennifer Mathieu

ISBN: 9781626726345

Book Summary:

A high school girl creates a newsletter advocating equal treatment of girls and boys in her school.

Summary of Concerns:

This book contains sexual activities; sexual assault; nudity; profanity and derogatory term use; reference to illegal drug use; alcohol use; references to alcohol abuse; and controversial political and social commentary.



3 / 5

Minor Restricted
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
1	He looks like a drunk porcupine. The drunk part may be true. Even if it is before lunch on a Tuesday.
24	Boys in East Rockport go down to Randy's Barbershop on Main Street and flip through Playboys from 2002 while they wait for Randy to charge fifteen dollars for the same terrible cut he's been giving them since preschool.
27	Sometimes I wonder what it would be like to live in a town that doesn't revolve around seventeen-year-old boys who get laid way too often just because they know how to throw a football.
28	Under his football jersey, Jason is wearing a white T-shirt with big black letters. It reads GREAT LEGS—WHEN DO THEY OPEN?
73	"Okay, now I get why you're so into him. Magic hands." She cracks up at her own words. I blush in spite of myself. "God, Claudia." "Oh, like it's not like that with you and him?" she asks, incredulous. "Like it's totally not about sex? You're just into him for his mind, right?"
79	Wow, so he votes Republican and he tends to sexist Neanderthals on the side. Sounds like a real winner.
83	"I mean, I just think you don't have to label it," Claudia says. "Like the word feminist is a really scary, weird word to people. It makes people think you hate men. I'd rather just say I'm for, you know, equality." "But isn't that what feminism is?" I say. "Equality? I don't think it means you can't want to go out with guys. I mean, I'm not trying to be difficult or whatever." ..."I mean, I think you can call it humanism or equalism or peopleism or whatever." She yawns again, louder this time. "I just think girls and guys should be treated the same." "Me, too," I say. "So we agree," Claudia says. "Of course," I say, even though I don't actually think we do.
90	4) Hey, do you want to make out? ..."Listen, you will never believe the shirt I just saw Jason Garza wearing," she says. I'm grateful she doesn't seem to notice how worked up I am so I don't have to explain my stupid social faux pas with Seth. "Does he have on the one about what time a girl's legs open?" I offer, still a little jittery. "No," Claudia says. "This one is worse. There's a big red arrow on it pointing to his junk, and it says Free Breathalyzer Test Blow Here."
92	It's super likely that Jana is so high right now she doesn't know what she's wearing.
95	"This whole thing is just so gross and sexist," she says, her angry pace of walking so quick I have to double-time my own steps to keep up despite my long legs. We pause only so we can get our lunches out of our lockers. Then Lucy starts up again. "I mean, it's totally random. These girls have to stand up and allow themselves to be looked at and endure this ... like ... public shaming." She spits out the last word. "I know, it's gross," I answer, waving to Claudia, who is waiting for us near the entrance to the cafeteria. "So this has happened before?" Lucy asks. "Yeah, a couple of times last year. Whenever the administration decides we're falling out of line in terms of our clothes or whatever."

	"But that asshole Jason whatever-his-name-is is allowed to wear insulting T-shirts every day of the week, yeah?"
96	"He told her top was inappropriate and she should have known better," Claudia says. "He really laid into her." "It's because she has biggish boobs," Meg says under her breath. "Like you can control that."
97	"I mean it," Lucy continues. "It is. Making girls monitor their behavior and their appearance because boys are supposedly unable to control themselves? That is one of the oldest fucking tricks in the book."
100	Modesty is a virtue that never goes out of style! What a bastard! I can't help myself. Glancing up to make sure the teacher isn't paying attention, I lean over to the rolling-eye girls—Marisela Perez and Julia Rivera—and whisper, "Have you ever noticed he never goes after the guys wearing those gross shirts about sex?"
105	"They're going crazy cracking down on the dress code. But only the girls." My mom takes a bite of meat loaf and looks confused. "What do you mean 'only the girls'?" "Like pulling girls out of class because their pants are too tight or they're showing too much skin. Then the girls have to wear ugly gym shirts over their clothes for the rest of the day as, like, a punishment." I hear Lucy's words from Monday's lunch in my ears. "It's ridiculous. Why should girls be responsible for what boys think and do? Like the boys aren't able to control themselves?" ..."It's just contributing to the narrative that girls have to monitor their bodies and behaviors, and boys have the license and freedom to act like animals. Don't you think that's unfair to girls? Don't you think that's shortchanging boys? The whole thing is just toxic."
114	The streetlights are bright enough for me to see my mom and John in the front seat. Kissing.
128	Kate has always been sort of a badass, talking back to teachers when they won't let her go to the bathroom or get a drink of water.
140	In late night phone calls and texting marathons, she'd told me how she let him touch her under her bra and that it hadn't felt particularly great—only like he'd been trying to squeeze the air out of a deflating birthday party balloon.
152	I want to know what it feels like to have a boy's lips on mine. I want to press my entire body up against his and kiss him.
155	My mother knows I'm old enough to understand that John didn't just show up at our house at nine in the morning to catch up on old times. And I know she knows I know. I squeeze my eyes shut as the idea of my mother and John having Sexual Intercourse invades my brain. ...As I fill Claudia in, she squirms appropriately at the idea of my mother and John Doing It.
158	My mom had her boyfriend spend the night last night—I wasn't here or anything ... but she told me about it and it's just gross. Is this that super conservative dude you told us about at lunch?
170	The bump 'n' grab is exactly what it sounds like. A boy bumps you in the hallway. Maybe quasi-gently with a hip. Maybe more forcefully like he's enjoying himself a little too much. When you stumble, there's a grab. Sometimes you get goosed around the waist. Sometimes you get pinched on the butt. And as quickly as it starts, it's over, and the boy is off down the hall, maybe squawking that he's sorry. Maybe laughing at the top of his lungs. ...This morning, as I make my way to English, it happens to me. I can't even get a sense of

	which guy does it, he's so fast, but his fingers manage to make it just under my shirt, cold and rough on my waist.
172	Considering permission granted, I explain to Lucy that the bump 'n' grab is one of many games some of the boys at East Rockport like to play. "Last year, they started this thing where they tried to take pictures up girls' skirts and then posted them online," I explain. "There was this whole point system to it, too."
174	Bump. I gasp, catching my breath. It comes from behind, and just as I try to catch my balance, I feel a hand on my back. Snap! My bra strap slides back against my skin with a sting.
178	"How was your day?" she says. Two asshole guys bump 'n' grabbed me and one not-asshole guy told me he thinks I'm one cool girl.
185	And Seth leans in. His hand slides up and around the back of my neck and his mouth is on mine and at first I can't help but think about the mechanics of it. Like the sense of his tongue against my tongue, soft and gentle and alive. Like the subtle pop! of our lips pulling apart before they go back together again almost immediately. But it takes just a few milliseconds before those thoughts escape me and I'm kissing Seth Acosta and how do any two people who like each other not just kiss constantly? How do you do this and stop? Ever? So the answer is we don't stop. Not right away, anyway. There in that Honda on the first night of winter break in the parking lot of the East Rockport public beach, Seth Acosta and I kiss and we kiss and keep kissing.
186	I sink deep under the covers, replaying all the kissing in my mind—in the car at the beach, and on the drive home when we kissed at the stoplights, and when Seth walked me to the front door and we kissed standing up.
188	Did her parents split up? No, they've been together for a bajillion years and Claudia is always complaining about how they kiss with tongue even in front of her and her brothers.
189	"Well, Mitchell walks up to me, just, like, comes right at me, and does that fucking bump 'n' grab bullshit," she says. "Only ... when he grabs me, he just, like, pins me up against the wall and he actually slides his hand up under my shirt. And he, like..." She pinches up her face, wincing. "He, like, grabbed me. Grabbed one of my breasts and squeezed it." That motherfucking asshole. "Oh, Claudia," I say, my voice soft. "Claudia, I'm sorry." Claudia is crying again, and I realize that I'm crying, too. "It gets worse," Claudia says, wiping the tears sliding down her cheeks with her fingers until she just gives up and lets them fall. "I told him to stop it. That he was hurting me. And he just, like, laughed it off, you know? He just made me stand there like that for what felt like forever, just pawing at me. I could feel his hot breath on my neck. And it hurt. It hurt so much."
192	"Just tell me if he kissed you. And if he was nice." I grin. "Yes," I say. "And yes."
196	If a boy gropes you in the hallway- TAG HIS LOCKER with a Moxie sticker!
198	"Now where were we?" Seth says, like a guy in a cheesy movie, and we both start laughing before we start kissing, letting ourselves melt into the couch. ...My mom will be home from work soon, and even though she knows that Seth and I have been hanging out almost every day over break, I don't think she'd be too jazzed to see us

	kissing on the couch. Or does what we were doing constitute making out? ...Seth kisses me one more time before ducking out and walking down the block to where his car is parked, out of sight and sound of Meemaw and Grandpa next door.
223	I'm making out with my boyfriend. Even though Seth and I have been going out for almost two months—since Christmas, really—sometimes I have to stop (briefly) in the middle of a make-out session and consciously recognize that yes, Seth Acosta is my boyfriend. And I get to make out whenever I want. The way he kisses that place right behind my ear. The way he can't stop touching my hair, running his fingers through it over and over until I get goose bumps. The way he looks at me with his dark eyes, his cheeks flushed, before he collapses into me and we kiss again. Only normally this happens in his car or by the beach or in my living room before my mother gets home from work. Tonight it's happening in his house—in his house decorated full of strange paintings and sleek, shiny furniture—the total opposite of Meemaw's country kitchen vibe. (There's not a damn rooster knickknack in sight, that's for sure.) Making out in this house makes the making out seem more grown-up somehow. Or at least more sophisticated. Finally, we pull apart, catching our breaths. "My parents are going to be here soon," he says, blinking. Trying to steady himself. I peer at him from my end of the couch. I really want to attack him again. "Yeah," I say, "I don't want my face to look all, like, make out-ey when they get here." "I didn't realize make out-ey was a word," Seth says, grinning. "It totally is." A smile breaks out on my face, and I lean in and kiss him again. It's a testament to how super crazy I am about Seth that I would even risk making out with him in his house so soon before his mom and dad are set to arrive with dinner.
226	That's when Alejandro offers me some wine. "Red or white, Viv?" he asks, a bottle in each hand. He's younger than Zoe. ...My mom has let me have a sip of her wine in the past when I was curious ("Don't tell Meemaw, okay?") and I've had my fair share of crappy semi-cold cans of beer at stupid parties when people's parents were out of town, but I've never been offered alcohol by an adult in a way that felt so casual.
229	Seth pulls the car into the public beach parking lot. I can see a few other cars here, parked down the row. It's prime make-out territory tonight.
230	"My mom literally bought me a box of condoms for my sixteenth birthday after I started going out with Samantha," he says. "She wrapped them in fancy wrapping paper and put a bow on them and everything." Seth owning condoms. Seth having sex with Samantha. Seth wanting to have sex with me. Seth and me having sex. Condoms, sex, Seth, sex, sex, and sex. That's essentially what runs through my mind in the seconds after Seth speaks.
232	I lean into Seth and we kiss and somehow it's like a new kind of kissing. Kissing full of even more possibility, which is both scary and exciting. Eventually I have to be getting home, so after one final kiss we pry ourselves apart and head back to his car. As Seth drives toward my house he says, "Valentine's Day is coming

	up.” “Okay,” I tell him, shooting him a look, “but I’m not having sex with you next week.”
233	“You can always play the bump ‘n’ grab game with me, if that helps,” Seth says, and the tiny part of me that wishes he wouldn’t make a joke of it disappears as soon as we press our lips together.
239	Since his public display of Sharpie affection on Valentine’s Day, we are definitely an item at East Rockport High. And the highs I’m getting from our relationship (making out, hanging out, making out, hanging out) are enough to dull the mix of anger and sadness I feel when I think about how Principal Wilson managed to stomp out Moxie in one threat-filled assembly.
241	Tradition implies something of value being repeated, I guess, but East Rockport High’s March Madness is empty of anything resembling values—not any decent ones, anyway. It’s a system of brackets with sixty-four junior and senior girls, about a quarter of the girls in each class. The rest aren’t included because they’re not deemed ballot-worthy. The brackets are created by the upperclassmen guys who rule the school—the jocks and the popular guys. The Mitchell Wilsons of our world. Over the course of a couple of weeks, they use some complicated system of voting and personal testimony to pit girls against each other as the brackets lead to one girl in the junior or senior class. The final girl is referred to—casually and frequently—as East Rockport’s Most Fuckable.
246	I stand as Seth approaches, and we share a quick kiss.
247	I’m totally sure he’s not doing it on purpose, but Seth is a guy, and he can’t ever know what it feels like to walk down a hallway and know that you’re getting judged for the size of your ass or how big your boobs are. He’ll never understand what it’s like to second guess everything you wear and how you sit and walk and stand in case it doesn’t attract the right kind of attention, or worse, attracts the wrong kind. He’ll never get how scary and crazy-making it is to feel like you belong to some big Boy Monster that decides it can grab you and touch you and rank you whenever and however it wants.
259	But I just smile and nod. At this, Seth reaches out and runs his thumb over my knee, sending an electric shiver up my body. I give him a knowing look. “Oh, do you want to fool around or something?” I ask, acting like I’m surprised. “I don’t know, do you?” Seth asks, his voice casual, like we’re talking about what we want to watch on Netflix. ...I want to attack him right there. So I do, reaching over to kiss him and letting myself fall into him, forgetting all my mixed-up feelings and ignoring the sense that the conversation we just had didn’t really change anything at all. That it was just a make-nice before the make out. But in this moment, with Seth’s hands reaching up my back and his lips making their way to that spot on my neck, I will myself not to care much.
262	I think about Emma Johnson winning Most Fuckable Girl when I see her in English, sitting at her desk taking notes as Mr. Davies speaks. I think about inviting her to Kiera’s thing and it’s like thinking about inviting a debutante to a drunken tailgate.
268	Lucy nudges Claudia with an elbow and all of us notice a paper bag on the floor with a slim bottle in it. “Vodka,” Jane whispers. She winks. “Fortified, please,” Lucy says without hesitation as she forks over her money, and soon we are clutching plastic cups of special lemonade.

269	A lazy smile slips across her face and I'm pretty sure she's had a fortified lemonade or two. I take a sip from my second one. My lips feel semi-numb. ...As I watch Lucy spin and knock her dark curls around, and as I listen to Claudia laugh and sing along (badly), it occurs to me that this is what it means to be a feminist. Not a humanist or an equalist or whatever. But a feminist. It's not a bad word. After today it might be my favorite word. Because really all it is is girls supporting each other and wanting to be treated like human beings in a world that's always finding ways to tell them they're not.
276	Mitchell Wilson tried to rape me at a party.
288	"I don't know," she answers. "I'm already in trouble for putting my name on the form. Wilson probably won't even believe you. And he'd rather blame some Mexican girl from the city than a nice white girl like you who's been here all her life."
299	Mitchell Wilson snorts under his breath. Mitchell Wilson, who is almost certainly a rapist.
303	"First I want to say thanks for coming out here," she begins. "And I want to say that I didn't want it to come to this. When Mitchell Wilson tried to assault me at a party last weekend..." Her voice breaks again. Then, from the back, I hear a girl shout, "We believe you!" Emma squeezes her eyes shut, collects herself, then continues. "I was able to get away. But then later when I tried to tell Principal Wilson, he wouldn't listen. He told me that I'd imagined it! That it was nothing and to forget it. Well, I won't forget it! And I don't want the school to forget it either!"
312	Mom doesn't answer, just walks over to the cabinet where she keeps a small bottle of bourbon. She drops two ice cubes into a juice glass—plink, plunk—and then pours a decent amount of amber liquid over them. Only after she takes a generous swallow does she answer.
314	She gives me a knowing look and starts heading down the hallway before running back to grab the bottle of bourbon.
316	"Okay then we'll have to kiss very quietly," I tell him. "Like super stealth quiet?" he asks, leaning into me. My cheeks warm up, and my body thuds with anticipation. "Like super intense, extra level stealth quiet," I answer. Or rather, I try to answer. Because by the third or fourth word Seth is kissing me, and I'm kissing him, and all I can hope is that my mother stays in her bedroom for a while, because from the way Seth's kisses make me feel, I don't know how we're ever going to stop.

Profanity	Count
Ass	57
Bitch	3
Dick	16
Fuck	31
Piss	13
Queer	2
Shit	39