

# Quirky Québécois film meets comedy quota

**By Ryan Kamphuis**  
A&E EDITOR

When you were in high school, what did you take seriously? While most would answer with anything from class to dating to getting out of high school, there's one person who would say communist revolution. "The Trotsky" is the tale of 17-year-old Leon Bronstein, a high school student in Montreal who is convinced that he is the living reincarnation of Bolshevik revolutionary Leon Trotsky.

Directed and written by Jacob Tierney, "The Trotsky" is a 2009 Canadian comedy starring Jay Baruchel as Leon Bronstein. Convinced that it is his duty to live the life of the famous Russian, Leon has his entire life planned out in front of him, including everything from multiple exiles, meeting someone named Vladimir Ulianov (who will later be changing his last name to Lenin), marrying an Alexandra that is 9 years his senior, and being assassinated. And while he is only 17, he needs to start now to be able to live up to his name. And start he does, leading everything from hunger strikes to coup d'états in the name of social justice.

The film is a high school comedy with a twist. Like other high school comedies like "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" and "The Breakfast Club," the central theme of "The Trotsky" is that of rebellion. Except in this case, instead of rebellion manifesting itself in the skipping of class or the flaunting of authority by not taking detention seriously, "The Trotsky" manifests its teenage rebellion through a refusal to accept society's status quo when it comes to students. While there were many funny moments in the film because of this, many of the jokes might fall flat to most. The movie is chock full of subtle

jokes and references that will fly over most people's heads due to the fact that they make references to everything from Trotsky's life to political philosophy to historical events.

The one truly excellent thing that brings the entire film together is Jay Baruchel's performance as Leon Bronstein. Baruchel's performance is flawless, and he perfectly plays the dedicated, awkward but well-meaning individual that Leon is. Many scenes are saved by the dedication that Baruchel shows to his role – by the end of the movie you almost think you are watching a documentary about a real person, and that this character is not an actor.

One of the best parts of the whole movie is the feeling that everything happening in it could actually happen. As was said earlier, the root of this film is teenage rebellion against the apathy and boredom of high schoolers, and the status quo treatment of these students by administration and society. The things that Leon and his comrades are fighting against are the issues we all dealt with in high school and hated. What Leon is working for is something we all wanted to do: to rebel against what we hate and work to make it better. The film is just a crazy way of showing this base idea.

Overall, I would recommend seeing "The Trotsky" if you're looking for a laugh and a trip back to your high school days. Not all the jokes may make sense, and some of the movie may seem downright crazy, but overall the movie leaves you entertained and feeling good. And for some, myself included, the film may be inspirational – firing you up to stop accepting the status quo, and work to make things better. And any film that can make you laugh while convincing you to go out and make things better has got to be good!



Image courtesy of imdb.com

## What's on *Ryan Hynes'* playlist?



What's on *your* playlist?  
Email [ae@technewsiit.com](mailto:ae@technewsiit.com)!

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## A different type of **exam** before finals week:

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Do you know how big yours is?

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**How many campus sustainability forums have you attended so far this year?**

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