



Peggy (Molly Shannon) is reduced to an empty husk of a person after her dog, Pencil, dies after an accidental poisoning. This event becomes a catalyst that drives her to appreciate all animals on a deeper level. Eventually, she adopts a vegan lifestyle, adopts numerous animals that are set to be terminated by the local animal shelter, and eventually alienates most of her friends and co-workers by forcing her new animal-loving agenda in their collective face. The moral? AWWWWW, DOGGIES ARE CUTE!

You have got to be shitting me.

Let me break down the plot for you as it actually happens and not as it could be seen through the eyes of some loon who takes their dog to a psychiatrist. Sweet little Peggy lets her dog out one night and gets impatient when it won't come back in. Even when she can clearly tell that the dog is about to escape from the yard, she decides that it's too much of a hassle to walk 20 feet, pick the thing up, and bring it back inside. So she knowingly lets it run amok while she heads back inside and sleeps. Now if that doesn't say "timeless emotional bond" then nothing does

Cut to the next morning. Would you believe that Peggy's precious little angel, while having a right good adventure, ran into the neighbors garage and gobbled up some kind of poison? Not surprisingly, it dies. Tapping into classic crazy people logic, Peggy, who left the dog to wander in the first place, doesn't take responsibility for this outcome. Oh no. She blames the neighbor for having widely available pest killer in his garage. I'm serious. Of all the nerve. What was he thinking having dangerous chemicals in his own house?

The rest of the film pretty much carries along with Peggys converting to a vegan lifestyle, pressuring everyone around her to support animal rights movements and adopt dogs from the local shelter, forging checks from her company to donate to animal charities, destroying her sister's clothing that even potentially looks like fur, and so on. All the while she muses on the nature of love and relationships and finally decides that animals are way better than people in that respect too. Awesome. Everything she does is magically forgiven at the end by everyone she has alienated or wronged and she goes on to protest more animal shit.

The only part of this movie I liked was a 2 minute conversation between Peggy and her boss in which he explains that "We don't test on animals for fun. We do it to save lives." That brief injection of sensible thinking passed quickly but was enough to make me smile.

Regina King, as Peggy's friend Layla, tries desperately to salvage the movie with a few good lines, but to no avail. Peter Sarsgaard's talent is wasted in his role of the world's biggest pussy. John C. Reilly is there because, well, he's the default "average bloke" actor of the day. John can certainly do better as well, but a paycheck is a paycheck.

On top of all this, practically every conversation is shot in (what I call) shitty art student vision. This is where each member of the conversation addresses the camera (as the other person) through a close-up shot. It would take a while to explain accurately but suffice to say this method of depicting the interaction between two characters will quickly make your brain hurt.

If your life functions based around principles of reason and logic, Year of the Dog will be about as enjoyable as standing in front of the Arc of the Covenant when it's opened.

If you are drug around on a leash by confused emotion and sentimentality, then you may get a kick out of some of the antics and shenanigans that take place. My face melted off about 45 minutes in and I have yet to find most of it.

C- (1.82 out of 4.00) Your dog may want to see this, but chances are pretty good that you sure as hell won't.

**Tags:** [Molly Shannon](#) [1]



[Laura Dern](#) [2]  
[Josh Pais](#) [3]  
[John C. Reilly](#) [4]  
[Year of the Dog](#) [5]  
[Regina King](#) [6]  
[Tom McCarthy](#) [7]  
[Peter Sarsgaard](#) [8]

**Source URL:** <http://shakefire.com/review/year-of-the-dog>

**Links**

[1] <http://shakefire.com/tags/molly-shannon>  
[2] <http://shakefire.com/tags/laura-dern>  
[3] <http://shakefire.com/tags/josh-pais>  
[4] <http://shakefire.com/tags/john-c-reilly>  
[5] <http://shakefire.com/tags/year-of-the-dog>  
[6] <http://shakefire.com/tags/regina-king>  
[7] <http://shakefire.com/tags/tom-mccarthy>  
[8] <http://shakefire.com/tags/peter-sarsgaard>