

# 'Snakes on a Plane' soars to new lows

## Instant cult classic satisfies Internet community's expectations

By BEN DEDMAN | STAFF WRITER

Early this year, incredulous fans heard the coming of an unlikely summer blockbuster — it's called "Snakes on a Plane" (SoaP) and stars Samuel L. Jackson.

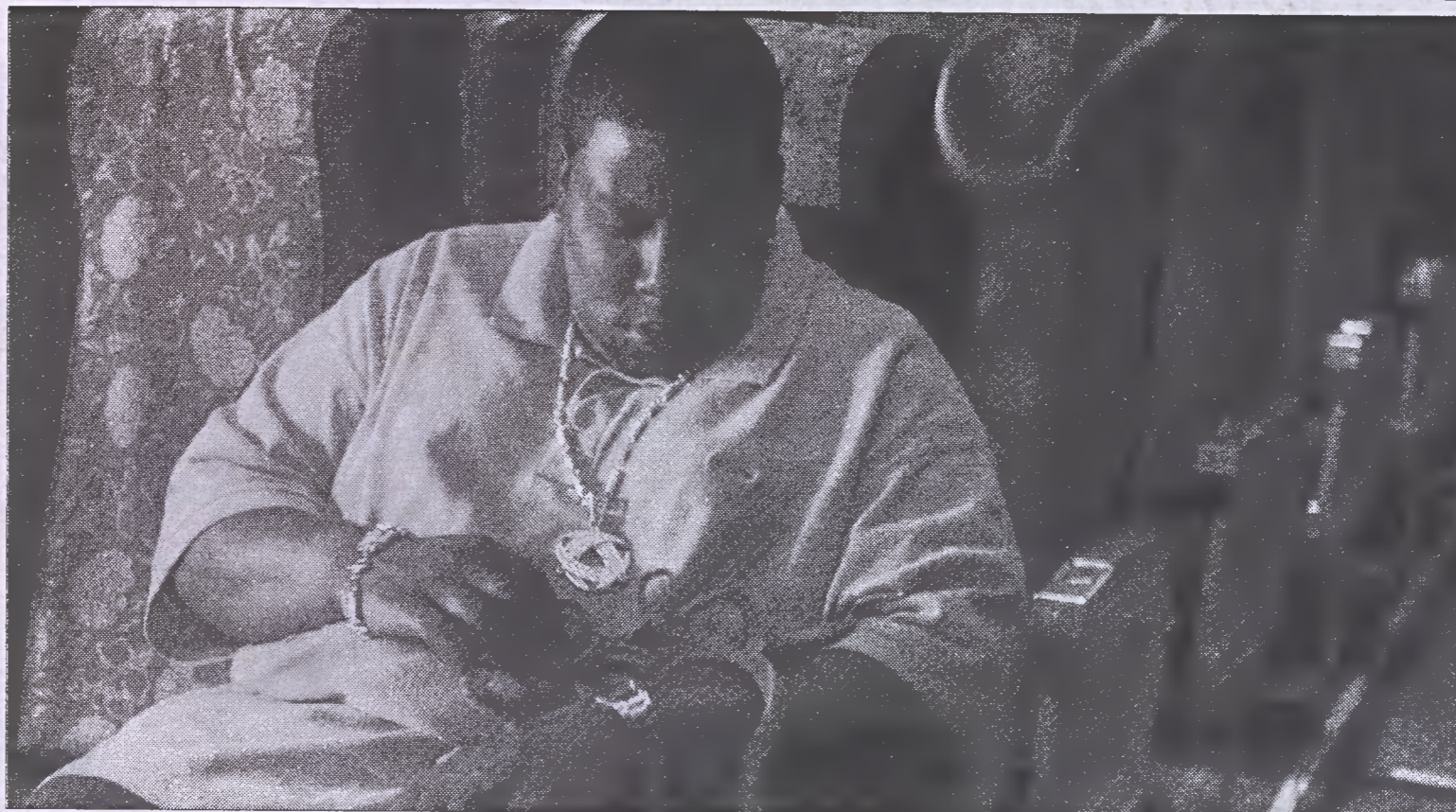
When SoaP was first pitched in 1995, it was rejected by all 30 major Hollywood studios. After a brief shelf life, it seems Hollywood was finally crazy (or desperate) enough to reconsider.

Instantly, SoaP was a cult classic and the Internet was slithering with excitement. As expectations for the film grew, cartoons satirized the concept, blogs became fascinated with the idea, and, according to The Guardian, SoaP became "perhaps the most Internet-hyped film of all time."

After filming finished and SoaP garnered a PG-13 rating, the filmmakers decided to honor the Internet's expectations of the film, which basically included Samuel L. Jackson storming around the fuselage of a plane killing rampant snakes and shouting "I've had it with these mother f---ing snakes on this mother f---ing plane."

Director David Ellis increased the violence, nudity and profanity enough to warrant an R rating, and, to the delight of all, added Jackson's notorious line to the script.

If you are hesitant about spending your money on SoaP, you should know that it reaches, sur-



KENAN THOMPSON PLAYS PASSENGER TROY MCDANIEL

passes and satisfies all expectations.

After a young man (Nathan Phillips) witnesses the murder of a prosecutor, he is picked up by FBI agent Neville Flynn (Jackson) to reluctantly testify. Unfortunately, the crime happened in Hawaii, and the trial is scheduled in Los Angeles. In a commercial airliner en route to L.A., Jackson and his witness discover hundreds of poisonous snakes making their way to the fuselage.

It is, as many expectant viewers must suspect, an utterly ridiculous

film. Some might even be so bold as to call it convoluted cinematic trash, and rightly so, because finding morality or redeeming value in it proves to be as difficult as finding a conceivable plot.

If SoaP is trash, then it is superlative trash. Splendidly violent and unremittingly ridiculous, there are no less than 50 snake attacks, each one unique. Pick your favorite body part, no matter how private, and I guarantee that a snake bites it.

In one of the first attack sequences, a scene drenched in cult-

ish sarcasm, a milk snake viciously attacks a woman's bare breasts in the airplane restroom.

Also, besides simply having snakes on a plane, there are also snakes in any other scenario you might ask for. There are snakes in microwaves, snakes in a sex scene, snakes with drug use, snakes on fire, snakes being shot, snakes flying, dogs being thrown at snakes, and, according to agent Flynn, "snakes on crack."

Though Ellis and screenwriters John Heffernan and Sebastian Gutierrez did a commendable job

of exhausting all of these possibilities for SoaP, it is Jackson that commands the film's true genius.

SoaP is the quintessential Jackson vehicle. In almost every scene, Jackson's "badass" persona is highly reminiscent of his earlier projects (Pulp Fiction, Jackie Brown, Goodfellas, and Die Hard 3) with dynamic action sequences, electric monologues, one-liner quips and plenty of profanity.

Jackson also saved the film from a near disaster. Had the film been called Pacific Air Flight 121, which it had been originally, it never would have amassed its dedicated followers. "We're totally changing that back," Jackson said. "That's the only reason I took the job: I read the title."

When agent Flynn finally says the line that is sure to have audiences ecstatic — "Enough is enough. I've had it with these mother f---ing snakes on this mother f---ing plane" — I found that I had not had it. In fact, I could have handled twice as many mother f---ing snakes on that mother f---ing plane.

That is for the future. At the 2006 MTV Movie Awards, Jackson made this proclamation: "No movie shall triumph over Snakes on a Plane, unless I happen to feel like making a movie called Mo' Mothaf---in' Snakes on Mo' Mothaf---in' Planes."

I would gladly flock to any religion that could create that miracle.

## Students propose ethical purchasing policy

By KATIE BAILEY | STAFF WRITER

"Our school doesn't put its money where its mouth is too often," said senior Nathan Sebens.

Sebens was recently part of a Quaker faith and practice class project that made the College challenge this notion. The final capstone project of the class was to create a new ethical purchasing and procurement policy for Guilford College. Sebens and three other students, along with Max Carter, director of the Friends Center and campus ministry coordinator, spent last spring semester researching Guilford's current purchasing policies and then drafting the new guidelines.

The draft is consistent with part 3.1 of the

Strategic Long Range Plan which "ensure[s] that our Quaker background dictate the purchasing and procurement of goods at this institution." A full version of the plan can be found on the College's Web site.

In order to make Guilford ethically responsible in its purchasing policies, the document requires that the school have one committee responsible for all purchases, hire more staff to do so, evaluate the ethical practices of companies we already do business with, and do the same when forming new business relationships. It also calls for campus community involvement and an approved list of ethical vendors.

Sebens said, "Guilford should make a commitment to balance their values and their spending," and I agree wholeheartedly.

Some students and staff at our school already have the values that the policy calls for.

Three years ago when I came to Spring into Guilford, on the front page of The Guilfordian there was an article about students cutting the power cords on all the Coke

machines around campus because they did not agree with the ethical practices of the company. Even though I was not a Guilford student at that time, I was proud of our students and excited to soon be part of such a morally-aware school.

Some students still have the same ethical consciousness today. For instance, Noah Mace, a sophomore transfer, is currently investigating the controversial environmental practices of Kimberly Clark, the company we get many of our paper products from.

While students like Mace have the idealistic drive to investigate companies like Kimberly Clark, it is still the school's duty to spend its money responsibly. For that reason, I do not think that Guilford as a whole institution should comply with this perfect vision, and a compromise between the ideal and the economical must be reached.

Max Carter said that he "would like to have guidelines for the departments when it comes to making purchases here," but added, "All departments will have to take this seriously in order for it to work."

That is not going to happen, and here is why:

If we are already using student activity fees to send science students to conferences, how are the academic departments going to be able to afford ethically sound supplies for each class? Last year, Community Senate

heard proposals asking for "sweatshop-free" t-shirts that would have cost about \$20 each, even when bought in bulk. If t-shirt prices skyrocket like that, imagine what the cost of ethical laboratory supplies would be.

To create the compromise between money and ethics, the administration needs to provide departments with additional funds to spend on the more expensive ethical products.

If the ethical policy is truly going to encompass the whole campus, that would include everything from athletic gear, to cleaning supplies, to hotels where we host guest lecturers and the gas stations from which we will reimburse students. If a kid buys gas for their van at Exxon and then takes 10 other students on a club-sponsored camping trip, is the school really going to refuse to reimburse him or her because Exxon is an unethical company and not part of our policy?

Again, 100 percent ethical spending is not possible for expenses like these, and negotiation and exceptions are inevitable.

Although the proposed ethical purchasing and procurement policy is still being developed, it is not yet realistic. The school needs to compromise between what is affordable and what is ethical, as well as find more money to spend on ethically sound products. Students are not going to be happy, but that is the reality we are facing.

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