

# DICK'S PICKS

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## Thank You For Smoking



At first glance, this film would seem to appeal to movie watchers of the smoking persuasion, or at least a satire of those opposed to smoking. Actually, yeah, that's what this movie is about.

It's a satiric comedy on the prudish views of the non-smoking population and how manipulative both sides of the argument can be. Nick Naylor, chief spokesman for Big Tobacco, plays devil's advocate for the mass production and sale of cigarettes. The whole movie revolves around this man's amazing ability to make people believe the unbelievable. In his own words, "...argued correctly, you'll never lose an argument."

Before the title credits even finished I was hooked on this movie simply because of the music: a 1950's folk beat talking about how much the singer hates cigarettes though admitting to smoking himself. The film itself is just a constant contradiction of itself

never really condoning the use of cigarettes but never condemning it either.

The general theme for the film is the manipulation of argument. On both sides, contenders are bringing their best game to either defend or destroy the cigarette industry, as well as, firearms and alcohol.

Nick Naylor is a single father who sees his son on the weekends and travels across the country defending cigarettes and tobacco products. From the get-go, Naylor is faced with the formidable odds of a daytime television show audience and an array of guests, generally lead spokespeople of respective anti-smoking organizations, as well as a 15 year-old boy named "Cancer Boy." It's so unbelievable that it makes it hilarious when Naylor turns this "lion's den" into his own play ground by simply playing the crowd with a few choice words and stunning smile.

His greatest opposition comes from Vermont Senator Finisterre whose main political platform is opposed to cigarettes in all aspects of society: from youth smoking to classic films.

Naylor must also watch himself around a beautiful reporter, Heather Holloway, played by Katie Holmes, as well as the American public and their fanatic opposition to Naylor and his occupation. He must confront these hurdles all while trying to teach his son important life lessons in a way that may seem irresponsible but does prove to bring father and son together.

As the film goes on, it is hilarious to see Naylor verbally throw down with so-called "experts" and "victims" and end up turning the tables and coming out smelling like roses. Though this "hero of the people" is on top for most of the movie, an untimely course of events loses it all for him, and he no longer has the protection of the big tobacco conglomerates, his

relationship, or his friends.

He falls into state of depression which looks to be his demise and has no chance of coming back from. Then, the very son that Naylor had been molding in his image makes a convincing argument that sways him from the edge and brings him back into the fight alone against unprecedented opposition, but stronger than before.

The funny thing about this movie is that, despite the title, occupation, and whole argument, there is not one cigarette lit on film. For all the talk and effort in saying that smoking is "cool," "safe," and "popular" not one person takes a single puff of smoke. It is my opinion that the real moral of the story is not to defend smoking but rather to defend an individual's right to make a choice in their life.

Rather than following the herd, the film pushes people to listen to all sides of an argument and make their own-educated decision.

A good website to check out is [www.dhmo.org](http://www.dhmo.org), the creator of the website informed people of a devastating component of cancer. A common substance found in all cancers and most matter on earth: Dihydrogen Monoxide... Freakin' water!

As a result of this website, a group of people even traveled to Washington D.C. to fight for the regulation and protection from this "cancer causing" contaminant. These are the kind of people that, "Thank You for Smoking" was made for.

Well filmed, acted, and told, this film is a direct to DVD release definitely worth watching whether you're a smoker or not.

I give this film 4 out of 5 nuts.

## X-MEN 3: The Last Stand



As a fan of the first two *X-men* films, I questioned 20th Century Fox in their decision to push *X-men 3: The Last Stand* without director Bryan Singer. Instead, Singer took on another comic book film, *Superman Returns*, and *X3* was helmed by Brett Ratner. It probably would have been better for everyone, especially the fans, if these directors were switched. Singer directed the original *X-men* films masterfully, focusing the plot on the issues, not the powers involved. The real conflict between the characters and questionable morality really made the franchise a success. The super powers just added to the excitement. For those people that really enjoyed the first two movies, *X3* is not going to sit very well.

Brett Ratner simply made another Hollywood movie based on a comic book. There are amazing special effects and spectacular fight scenes very similar to that of comic books and a loose plot tying it all together. The original cast all reprised their roles but compared to the work they've already done, it is clear how much the characters have changed with little explanation. Some

characters have become far too timid while others have developed a very abrasive personality, leaving a bad taste in fans of the originals. Granted *X3* is supposed to be the last of the franchise, Ratner and the writers went a little overboard in 'tying loose ends' in the story. In order to bring it to a close with this film, the story was run into a brick wall. Key characters are killed off and important conflicts are resolved almost overnight, and there's not a second thought. It's as if someone took the 'boo-boo' of prejudice and social strife, kissed it, put Neosporin and a band-aid on it, and sent you back out to play.

Again, it's definitely a different type of movie yet still entertaining. A lot of new and long-awaited characters are introduced including Juggernaut. A problem with introducing this and more mutants was that no single character had a lot of screen time to show off their powers, with the exception of possibly Juggernaut. It seems that they were going for quantity over quality in showing more mutants and their powers. Casting for the new mutants was hit-and-miss for the most part. Kelsey Grammer, television's *Fraser*, was perfect for Beast. Well spoken and articulate, Grammer gave the character a sophisticated intellect that Beast is known for. The costume and make up work made the mutation of a muscular blue-furred man-animal quite believable. The Juggernaut, played by Vinnie Jones (*Snatch*, *Gone in 60 Seconds*, *Lock Stock*, and *Two Smoking Barrels*) was good in appearance but took a nose dive when he spoke. The intimidating, massive, gruff, and chiseled physique was almost negated by the comical English accent of Jones. Despite the humor in hearing Juggernaut speak in an accent, Jones did deliver a line from a hysterical web clip from the *X-men* cartoon series. In which a voice-dubbed

Juggernaut withstood constant attacks, batting away opponents like flies exclaiming, "Don't you know who I am? I'm the Juggernaut, bitch!"

The action in the film makes up for what it lacked in plot and character development. A battle sequence in the danger room tested the young Iceman, Shadow Kat, Colossus, and Rogue's ability to work as a team in battle and a final showdown between humans and mutants really got the blood pumping to see the all out use of mutant powers. Smaller conflicts between Wolverine and Juggernaut, Pyro and Iceman, and most of all Phoenix and Professor Xavier were just as impressive and showed the full extent of what these characters could do.

The DVD itself doesn't really offer too much in bonus features. The obligatory director commentary and some deleted scenes show a little insight into the production and alternate plot lines but nothing too impressive. If you saw this film in the theaters and left before the end of the credits, you can fast forward to a scene you might have missed. That scene and the actual end of the film nod towards another sequel, but I'm not getting my hopes up. All the news I've heard has said that there should be Wolverine and Magneto spin offs but no more *X-men* films.

So, if you don't know much about the *X-men* series, whether it be comic books, cartoons, or the other movies and just want to see a lot of comic style action, you'll probably enjoy this one. If you're expecting something like the first two films you're going to be disappointed but not entirely turned off to it. Take *X-Men 3: The Last Stand* for what it's worth and have a good time.

I give this film 3 out of 5 nuts.

# Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2, an amazing experience for gamers

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After two decades of sub par games which relied solely on how recognizable the title was, there is a Dragon Ball game worthy of your money. For those unfamiliar with the franchise, the story of *Dragon Ball* follows the life of Son Goku, a monkey-tailed boy loosely based on the traditional Chinese folk tale Journey to the West, from his life and adventures as a child all the way up to being a grandfather.

During his life, he fights many battles and eventually becomes the strongest martial artist in the universe (in *Dragon Ball GT*). He is not without help, however: the comic boasts a large ensemble cast of martial artist heroes and villains which provide the conflict that drives the story.

*Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2*, the latest *Dragon Ball* videogame from Atari, features one hundred and thirty different characters, each with their own moves and special abilities.

Although it doesn't have everyone, it has more than enough characters to satisfy virtually any fan of the series, even featuring characters from the various films that accompanied the series.

The first aspect of the game that strikes the gamer is its visual impact. The characters are so vivid that they make the actual anime look deprived in comparison. As opposed to previous games, in which any character could trigger a very limited array of scenarios within certain stages, the environment in *Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2* is highly interactive.

*Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2* does away with inconsistencies in power, such as when a character such as Frieza, who is supposed

to be capable of destroying an entire planet with one finger, gets swatted across the screen by an overgrown reptile. At the same time, the agility of certain weaker characters makes them usable in combat.

The sound is flawless and contains new renditions of familiar songs, and the character voices are taken straight from the series. It is yet to be seen if the same quality of voice acting will be applied to the US release.

The play control and responsiveness in this game are near perfect, which is a refreshing departure from previous installments. The only problem is the vast complexity of the control system. Although the in-game tutorial does help, the roster

of moves can be overwhelming at first glance. Given time, they will become second nature.

There are three modes in *Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2*: Adventure, Ultimate Battle and Versus, all of which offer a very unique experience for the gamer. The difficulty of each mode can be adjusted by choosing from three levels of difficulty, as well as by equipping various equipment to further regulate difficulty. The higher the difficulty one beats the game on, the greater the reward. There are certain secrets that can only be unlocked while playing on hard-difficulty.

Adventure mode provides an unprecedented amount of story, from the very beginning of the *Dragon Ball Z* series to the end of the *Dragon Ball GT* series. Adventure mode is filled with integrated storylines and

cut-scenes which will make any fan's day.

Ultimate Battle mode lets one choose a course and fight various opponents in a tournament-like setting, and Versus mode allows a gamer to challenge his friends (who can import settings from their own memory cards).

Due to various modes and numerous characters, this game can keep even the most avid game busy for months. *Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2* has a satisfying blend of fan-service and quality gaming that transcends the label of 'anime-based game' and actually makes a great showing as a fighting game, which raises the bar on what fighting games should include.

Easy to learn, difficult to master, and madly addictive, *Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2* has it all.



A scene from *Dragon Ball Z: Budokai Tenkaichi 2*.

### SUGAR RUSH

S A W F V L N Y K F V P E L J D M M R C  
P Y F R A G U S J U M I H A Z S J N I C  
L Y D F P Y D X M Z K W B J N E K T C T  
K F A N M E K F B O R O N L Y S Q B X C  
A F F N A K Z B O S I J I I R E J H I Z  
P A L O I C E C R E A M C E K E O K W O  
E T U W X K J E G M S I T M X R Y P T C  
S H W D A P E S U C N A K G E K E V E E  
R B J C K T R V Z G L W I Y L S H K P C  
J O P E A X O R T D Z F T L S J S Z I A  
M U G K B V T Y N H A A K R T M R D V K  
C A S A R A D A J Q U I A U N N E B P E  
D U E H O E W V Y O X M T T U O H H G S  
M M L S W O R O Q Z W D M H R Y S P I N  
T G T K N T M M I O V V Z L O W M L H I  
C R T L I Z G D L B U I X D D F A P I X  
J Q I I E Z U L H E W F R R A Z O X D G  
Q V K M L R A Y A W Y K L I M M W H Q T  
G S S A T M G Z A H N W M U B E V H B A  
R P U B N D X X L D I Q Y D H Q C K M U

### CANDY

HERSEHY  
KITKAT  
TWIX  
SKITTLES  
NOWANDLATERS  
REESES  
CUPCAKE  
CAKE  
BROWNIE  
COOKIE  
SUGAR  
MUSKATEERS  
MILKYWAY  
MILKSHAKE  
ICECREAM  
ICING  
MALLOWMARS  
RUNTS  
TAFFY

### It's All Inside

### DOWN

- White spots in a picture, according to Zaffis
- Pumpkin throwing medieval weapon
- Advanced student program
- Stacks Market point of pride
- Greek organization of brothers
- Seafaring burglar
- Reserved for the next drunk driving victim
- Last year, 16, 441 dollars were spent updating this

### ACROSS

- First date Queen
- Wildlife-loving senator
- Devastating component of cigarettes
- Early bird professor

9. One a day will keep the doctor away, but not the dentist

For the correct answers, please visit us in the Capital Times office, E-121 Olmsted.