

REVIEWS



'Slither' wacky comedy

By JEFF DeBRAY
of the Collegian Staff

"Everybody I've met so far has been crazy," Dick Kanipsia (James Caan) bemoans to Kitty Kopetzky (Sally Kellerman) in "Slither," a wacky and entertaining comedy.

Kitty then proceeds to rob a diner as Dick slips out the back door in quest of Barry Fenaka and an embezzled \$312,000 his dying friend Harry Moses told him about the day the two were paroled from prison.

What ensues is a humorous and suspenseful adventure with Dick leading the way through hidden identities and red herrings in search of the money.

Looming hot on their trail, though, are two massive and sinister looking black vans, providing the characters, as well as the audience, with many a tense and uneasy moment.

Credit the film's success mainly to director Howard Zieff, who used to direct commercials and is new to feature films. The screenplay by W. D. Richter is only average, but Zieff's direction raises it above the ordinary and makes it work.

Zieff's pacing of the film is excellent. There are no dull moments, as it zips along from one incident to another quickly building to a climax. He has an eye for characterization and a knack for handling actors.

All the roles are extremely well-handled with even the bit players contributing a unique and memorable moment of interest to the film.

In fact, in retrospect the film provides

more of these pleasurable moments rather than a single unified impression. This is because the film builds to such a point of interest and total absorption that the climax is anticlimactic, leaving the audience cold and expecting more than ultimately is delivered.

It is a letdown considering all that has come before, despite a nice try by Zieff and sly performances from Caan and Kellerman. Caan is extremely well suited to his role as an ex-con, as he wisecracks and bungles in his search for the money. Kellerman is also impressive in her role as an almost maniacal, impulsive woman, although her comedic talents which she displayed in M*A*S*H are not put to the best use.

As Barry and Mary Fenaka, Peter Boyle and Louise Lasser, two equally talented performers, virtually are wasted in roles that demand little.

But despite its deficiencies and the lack of a completely satisfying conclusion, "Slither" remains a fast-paced and extremely enjoyable film.

'Hitler' captures mood

By DIANE NOTTLE
of the Collegian Staff

Above all others in post-World War I Germany, Adolf Hitler alone was able to seize total control over the minds of his people. "Hitler: The Last Ten Days" explains why.

Produced by Wolfgang Reinhardt and directed by Ennio de Concini, the film chronicles Hitler's activities in his underground bunker complex during the ten days before his suicide, when Russian troops were marching toward Berlin.

The film's strong emotional impact grows primarily from the taut atmosphere created by the reactions of Hitler's companions to both him and the fast-approaching defeat. It is their obvious fear of Hitler that actually gives the film its strained, tense mood.

Hitler's subordinates at all times nervously maintain a certain distance

from him and comply with all his wishes, even to the point of thanking him profusely for his gift of cyanide capsules. Only after his death does anyone dare to defy his principles.

The director accomplishes all this through a style of consistent understatement and low-key conflict. It is a style of stark realism that relies to a great extent on the austerity of the bunker and the barrenness of Hitler's personal relationships to explain his decline.

The film's technical aspects not only contribute to the dramatic tension but comment on its subject as well. The only color scenes are those shot in the bunker, with its tones of blue and green and a striking absence of light.

In contrast, all outdoor scenes are shot in the bronze tone of old, faded photographs. Many of these, probably taken from old newsreel films, show the devastation Hitler brought to Germany.

The musical score contributes to this contrast of realism and comment. Practically no background music, except Hitler's favorite Strauss waltzes, is used

in the bunker scene, while the outdoor scenes are underscored by a doleful "Deutschland Uber Alles."

The cast also works well with this style. As Hitler, Alec Guinness, made up into an excellent physical likeness, conveys the image of a tired leader fighting to retain his power even though he sees the end coming.

Guinness successfully combines the frightening power of Hitler the legend with the insecurity of Hitler the man. Although Hitler completely dominated his military strategies, his subordinates, even his relationship with his mistress, Guinness portrays him as an ordinary man performing his everyday activities while preparing to die.

Only in two emotional outbursts — one over unexecuted orders, the other a confession to his mistress that he expects defeat — do Hitler's emotion and madness come through.

"Hitler: The Last Ten Days" is in essence the portrait of a supremely powerful man in decline. But the film shows just how frightening such a man can become.

the Collegian

PATRICIA J. STEWART
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JOHN J. TODD
Business Manager

Successor to the Free Lance, est. 1887

Editorial opinion:

Two bargains for ASA

The Associated Student Activities Budgetary Committee will have hard decisions to make next week. Budget requests reached more than twice the \$117,000 ASA can give out.

They should realize that some services for students are a bargain. Fulfilling the Undergraduate Student Government's request to fund a lobbyist in Harrisburg and the night Route R bus service will lead to excellent short-term and long-term benefits.

They should remember that Mark Jinks won the USG presidency because a majority of the students voting favored the proposals in his campaign platform. USG needs the funds to fulfill programs that students clearly want.

The threat of a steep tuition hike has made students aware that in Harrisburg they are sometimes an overlooked interest group. Occasionally, student leaders will lobby in Harrisburg, or legislators will visit the campus to speak to students. Not often, students will conduct a sporadic letter-writing campaign. The fact is that their needs are not made known on a day-to-day basis.

The lobbyist would remain in contact with legislators, informing them, educating them: He

would work with state agencies, acting as an ombudsman for student problems.

Decisions about what the lobbyist should do and do first would be made by the USG Executive Council, a body of student leaders representing the main interest groups on campus. Each of them has access to student opinion and awareness of their problems.

If ASA approves the \$13,000 request, students will have a long-needed voice in Harrisburg.

Begun last term, the Route R bus serves about 600 students a week, making a circuit each week-day evening past Bluebell, Executive House, Centre Towers, Nittany Gardens and other distant apartment complexes.

This means several hundred polluting cars do not clog the streets and parking lots of town and campus. It also means many students don't have to hitchhike and risk the possibility of being mugged or raped.

Until the University decides to provide such an essential service, USG has offered to fund it. Other groups that favor the route — OTIS, ARHS, IFC, Panhel — support USG's request.

By approving the request for approximately \$4,000, ASA will be answering another student need, getting another bargain.



"WILL DICK LOSE HIS JOB AND HIS SWELL HOUSE?....HOW MUCH DOES MARTHA REALLY KNOW ABOUT JOHN?....FOR THE ANSWER TO THESE AND OTHER QUESTIONS, TUNE IN TOMORROW...."

Your parents know?

TO THE EDITOR: Did you send a copy of "Skin flick festival" by Steve Ivey to your parents?

Pat, if I reproduced the May 18 article and sent it to each of our legislators, what effect do you think it would have on PSU appropriations? Tuition?

I wonder what you and Steve will graduate to as journalists.
John Gauss
Professor of agriculture
economic extension

Case for Colloquy

TO THE EDITOR: To those who feel that I have the ability to beat my drum with immortal words, may I present the case for Colloquy 73.

First, Colloquy was scheduled last fall for the weekend of May 17-20 when there was no direct conflict with any event. Spring Week was planned for the same weekend, months later, after we were locked in on that date with speakers' contracts. Anyone who feels Colloquy has a lot of gall to schedule their program, better check again.

Second, Colloquy has been accused of trying to kill the Spring Week program. Colloquy made every effort not to have a detrimental effect upon the Spring Week program. We rearranged program times, advertised Spring Week at branch campuses, gave away window ad space, made announcements about the Spring Week program at our main events. We even tried to reschedule George Carlin for Sunday night. In general, we cooperated in every way possible to help the Spring Week program.

Third, in regard to the Sunday night program, there obviously was a serious misunderstanding. Mark Rickoff and I are good friends; thus I don't doubt his motives are anything but the highest. Even at the last minute, Colloquy could have made the necessary adjustments to have the awards presentation in the middle of the evening program though we had never planned to.

The upsetting part was the behavior of the Spring Week group who came in with a circus air about them. Colloquy had

Rec Hall for the entire evening; thus the Spring Week crowd were guests and should have conducted themselves in a more appropriate manner with regard to the program in progress. Actions like cheering when "The Cage" announced they would only take two more questions are deplorable.

Colloquy, which is supposed to be about interaction within the University Community, would like to end all this. The Spring Week program was commendable this year. Mark Rickoff should be applauded for his efforts. However, you Spring Week groupies...

Bruce W. Kelly
Colloquy Chairman

Moses and the strike

TO THE EDITOR: Penn State has been blessed with a modern-day Moses — Young Socialists President Jim Cory, who must have wet dreams every night thinking about his God-given mission of leading the oppressed masses of students and workers through the desert (following a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night) to the promised land of the revolution. And, friends, he has chosen to begin his mission here at Penn State. Let me pause while you consider your unworthiness.

Mr. Cory suggests that what we need is "militant action in defense of our right for an education." But what are we to do? Of course... a student strike! How original. How...revolutionary. And how effective this strike will be. What better way to impress our legislators with our concern for education than to boycott our classes? It will surely break their hearts when they see what their penny-pinching has driven the students to do. And, since Harrisburg is only 80 miles away, it will strike fear into their hearts when this "militant act" occurs at their very doorsteps. I'd wager that if we're really cruel to them and keep it up for two or three days, we will have all 253 legislators up here, groveling at our feet, begging for mercy, kissing our rear ends and pleading to pour money into our pockets.

In reality, a strike is probably the worst answer. Mr. Cory fails to understand even the basic principle of a strike: a strike, to be effective, must cause hardship to someone with power to instigate change. I fail to understand how a student strike at University Park will in any way inconvenience the policymakers in Harrisburg. Mr. Cory's proposal also overlooks the many

legislators who are friends of the University; a strike could only jeopardize these friendships.

What is needed at this juncture is responsible action to convince the legislature that Penn State provides services that make it worth a larger tax dollar investment. A letter-writing campaign, a student lobbyist or pressure at the ballot box will begin this process of education; a student strike can only hinder it.

Moses once beat on a rock with a stick and water sprang forth. Mr. Cory wants to apply the same principle to the state legislature, in the hopes that money will flow. With a little rational thought, even he and his supporters might find that more subtle measures are in order.

Jay Weltzel
(9th-pre-law)

Whose rights?

TO THE EDITOR: Magistrate Yorks states the University was well within its rights to tell a student what he may keep in his room, but the University never reserved the right to search and then confiscate any illegal articles found.

When the University takes anything — refrigerators, bicycles, ovens, etc. — and destroys property, i.e. cutting a chain, the University has done something they have no right to do and is responsible for all damages.

The fictitious right that the University says it has extends over corridors, stairways and any other unauthorized location in the residence halls at any time.

In the terms of his contract the student agrees to pay the damage on all areas stated. Because he agrees to pay and the University makes no other stipulation, these areas become an extension of the student's room, so the University has no right in removing a bicycle.

The crimes committed by the University could include theft, burglary, blackmail and extortion.

Let me state right now that Howard Triebold, John Fishburn and Otto Mueller have a standing invitation to see how my room is designed for bicycle storage.

Timothy Daily
(6th-pre-med)

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