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Film Critique

## **Flight**

Director: Robert Zemeckis

Screenwriter: John Gatins

Year depicted: 2011

Year of film released: 2012

The film *Flight* is about Captain Whip Whitaker, an experienced pilot and alcoholic/drug addict. While flying a 96 passenger plane, they encounter some difficulties when some mechanical devices on the plane start to malfunction. Whip turns the plane upside down to prevent it from nose-diving and lands it in almost one piece, saving the lives of all but six of the people onboard. Whip is considered a hero until some investigations are conducted and it is discovered that he had drugs and alcohol in his system when the plane went down.

I believe the educational value presented in this film is that drug use has no place in an occupational field. Whether you are an alcoholic, recreational drug user or drug addict, you should have enough respect for your job to be clean while performing your tasks; especially when you have a job that requires you to take the lives of others into your hands. Whip has gotten too comfortable with his years of experience as a pilot and seems to think that boozing it up on the job is acceptable at the time.

Whip is an addict. Drugs can ruin your brain chemistry and force you to do anything to get high. The same goes for alcohol. Many alcoholics can avoid alcohol until they see it.

Before the flight takes off, Whip seems to be doing fine, but then he sees the mini bottles of vodka on the plane and that visual “forces” his brain to think that he needs a drink.

Before watching *Flight* I did not know that when investigations are performed after a plane crash, all of the flight crew are tested for drugs and alcohol. This concept totally makes sense, but it had never crossed my mind before. I also had never heard of a coco-puff, which is apparently a marijuana cigarette laced with cocaine. In the film, it is used to sober up and mellow out Whip when he can't control his alcoholism the night before his trial and drinks every mini bottle in the fridge of his hotel room.

The only aspect of *Flight* that I did not like was that Margaret, one of the flight attendants present during the crash, is forcefully persuaded to not testify at Whip's trial. I believe that taking an oath before a trial is sacred and lying in court is abysmal. The people trying to keep Whip out of jail persuade Margaret not to testify in the trial because they knew her testimony would send Whip to jail. This kind of tampering with evidence should be abolished.

I believe this film could be used to prevent drug use by showing people what can happen to your life when you let drugs and alcohol consume you. Whip stays clean for a while when he awaits his trial, but when he sees the mini bottles in the hotel fridge, his inner addict rears its head and he can't control himself. Although, having John Goodman act all *Big Lebowski*, making a coco-puff did make me want to try one. This part of the film could be omitted whilst being used for anti-drug purposes.

I give this film five out of five stars, because I'm an optimist and I really liked it. The storyline was well rounded and the character development was excellent. The film made me cry on more than one occasion. The special-effects made the film seem so real, it felt like I was on

the plane that crashed. The storyline wasn't farfetched either, it seemed so realistic that I had to look up whether or not it was based off true events. The film is fictitious, as far as I can tell, however, I did find that in January of this year a pilot was detained during pre-flight procedures for having a blood alcohol level higher than the legal limit, which is zero for a pilot. I would recommend this film to anyone.