



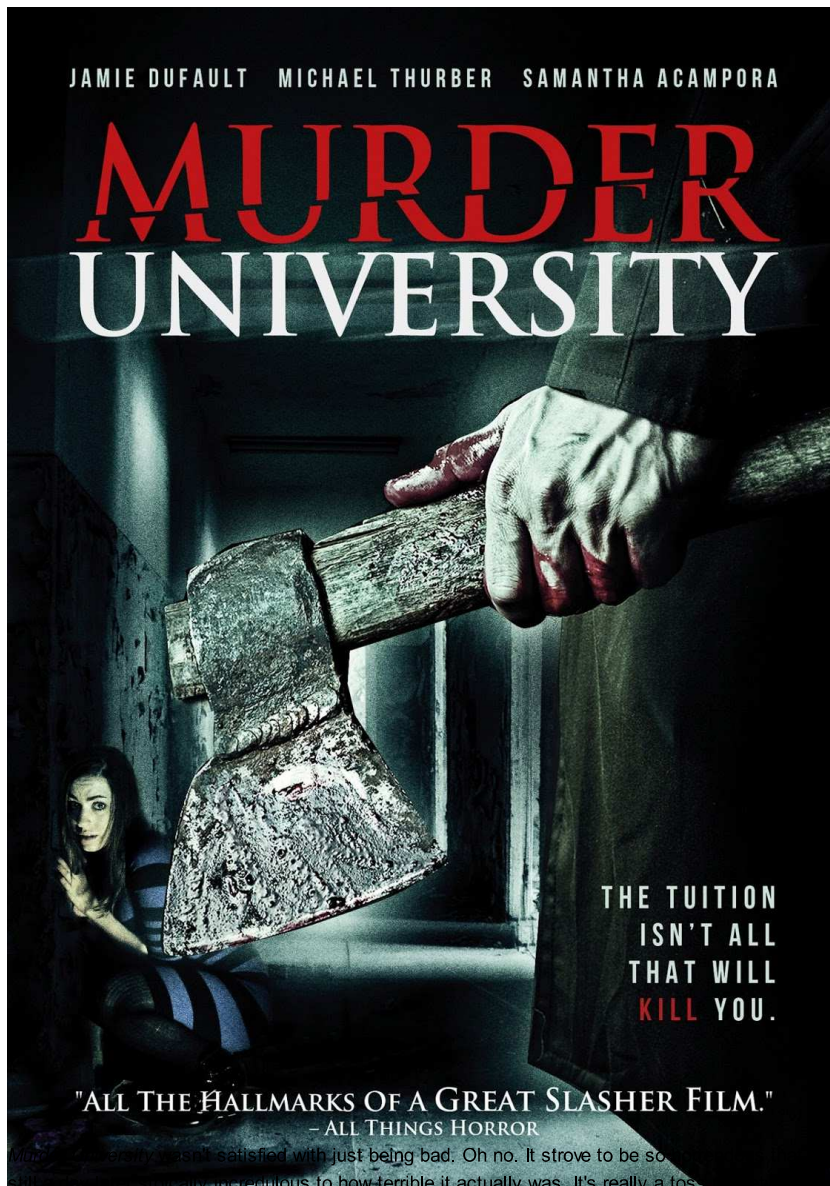
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Murder University DVD Review: Cyanide Capsule Sold Separately, Unfortunately

By [Mark Buckingham](#) on October 15, 2013 10:59 PM | [0 Comments](#)

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this and last year's [Mark of the Beast](#) for the crown of worst thing I've watched in the last decade or so.

I went in with tempered but optimistic hopes. After all, this is the same Richard Griffin who brought us the raunchy, campy, riotous [The Disco Exorcist](#). That movie did so much right, nailing the time period and cracking ridiculous, funny dialogue left and right. I guess that's the difference a good

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writer makes.

Murder University opens with four college kids in some random abandoned house basically asking to get killed, and of course they do, but not before ham-fisting in a surprise lesbian relationship between the two deceased jocks' girlfriends. Then they die boringly. Jump to the guy who I guess would be the protagonist, Josh (Jamie Dufault), who gets the college equivalent of wedgie, swirled, and picked on by everyone else. He really is a toilet seat of a character, but he's so entirely, incredibly lame that even the audience wants to beat him up and take his lunch money. He just sucks, and I was never rooting for him.

Other people start dying in the most unimaginative ways possible, sometimes flanked by boring, idiotic chase scenes where everyone is running slow so the camera can keep up. The masked murderers are up against prey who have all apparently had full frontal lobotomies, and a cop who can't hit the broad side of a barn at 10 paces. If you rip out the shitty acting and just get a one-page synopsis of the story, it might not sound that bad (spoilers inbound) – Josh's dad read about some crazy murderous cult that terrorized the town surrounding the local college, then went on to found the school to clear their names, and somehow found himself obsessed with starting the murders up again, enlisting the help of three others ("there will always be four," a phrase the movie will utterly bludgeon you with toward the end). The murderers were apparently never caught because everyone in this town's top speed is a gentle stroll and can't think past the end of their noses, so their offspring continue the "tradition" of being barely smarter than a toddler and stabbing people for no apparent reason. Josh just has to join up, and despite all logic and reason and good sense and the fact that they killed his first and only would-be girlfriend Meg (the adorable Samantha Acampora), he decides to join them. But then he doesn't, kills everybody, and becomes a psychopath himself who loves killing people.

It's not hilarious or a gore-fest or a "great slasher film" as the box quotes might have you believe. It's trite, boring, amateurish, and completely fails to be interesting, suspenseful, or engaging. I wanted to fast-forward through the whole thing after a few minutes. Here, these are some notes I made while watching it:

- 5min - Sigh, how long is this?
- 15min - Wow, this is shitty.
- 20min - I hope everyone in this whole movie dies. Twice.
- 26min - It's kind of amazing how every scene manages to be worst than the last.
- 30min - This sounds like it should be a plan to catch the killer(s) but it's actually not. Also, they could use some major gain adjustments on the screams and shouting. The dialogue is terrible and there's nothing scary about this.
- 35min - I wonder what's happening on the Internet.
- 48min - I think this movie has given me an eye infection.
- 51min - Just realized they completely abandoned the 80s theme they worked hard to establish early on.
- 53min - Awkward softcore porn.
- 54min - And there goes the only semi-cute/interesting character in the entire movie.
- 62min - If I weren't watching this for a review, I would have turned it off and burned the disc by now.
- 72min - "I don't care anymore if I live or die." Guess what, grizzled cop – me neither.

Imagine a mashup of *Urban Legend* and *The Skulls*. Now subtract anything good from it and add the ultra-boring "Sitting at a bar, lamenting my life" sequences that make up two-thirds of *Three on a Meathook*. Now punch yourself in the face a few times. You're almost to what it's like watching *Murder University*. Literally the best scene in the movie is the lone deleted scene, where Josh's poetry instructor happens upon him on a bench playing a Merlin toy (the only real '80s throwback in the movie), and proceeds to try to lift his spirits by reading him a poetic rendition of "Eye of the Tiger." I almost laughed at this scene except that it still had sad-sack super-loser Josh in it.

If you want to extend your suffering, there are two feature commentaries on the disc by writer and director or producer, director, and three actors. There are no subtitles, but there are trailers for a few other flicks by the same publisher.

There are so many better options out there these days to sink your time into than *Murder University*. I suggest you instead focus your Halloween viewing pleasure the recently delightful-yet-odd *Hatchet III*, *Frankenstein's Army*, and *ThanksKilling 3*.

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