

Airplane! (1980)



Directed by

Jim Abrahams

David Zucker

Genre: Comedy **Runtime:** 88 min **Country:** USA

User Rating: ★★★★★★★★☆☆ 7.7/10 (16,717 votes)

This is a **spoof** (light-hearted satire) of airplane disaster movies. (Note the theme music from "Jaws" at the start of the film.) Disaster movies follow a formula plot and style. The characters tend to be stereotypes and are often badly acted. **Airplane!** satirises the "disaster movie" genre in general, and airport disaster movies in particular, by taking the standard elements to extremes.

Plot:

Ted Striker just got dumped by his long-time girlfriend Elaine Dickinson, who works as a stewardess at Trans American Airlines. In his wish to get her back, he follows her aboard the plane, although he has had a deep aversion against anything winged since he lost several men in the war. During flight, he tries to contact her again and again, but as the crew and many passengers get seriously ill due to a bad fish meal, he has no chance to get to her. In fact, Ted Striker seems to be the only healthy person aboard that has piloting experience. Now, it is up to him to get the plane down in Chicago safely, before the poisoning starts causing casualties. But Ted Striker's aversion really is a serious psychosis, which breaks open and needs to be cured - right now.

Discussion:

1. What was the best scene in the film?
2. Which character did you find most interesting and why?
3. What made the film funny for you - characters, situations, language ...?
4. Did you feel you were able to understand **all** the humour? Do different cultures have different types of humour?
5. Is it easier or more difficult to discuss comedy than other types of film?