

= Animal House =

National Lampoon 's Animal House is a 1978 American comedy film from Universal Pictures , produced by Ivan Reitman and Matty Simmons , directed by John Landis , and starring John Belushi , Tim Matheson , John Vernon , Verna Bloom , Thomas Hulce , and Donald Sutherland . The film , a direct spin @-@ off from National Lampoon magazine , is about a misfit group of fraternity members who challenge the authority of the dean of Faber College .

The screenplay was adapted by Douglas Kenney , Chris Miller , and Harold Ramis from stories written by Miller and published in National Lampoon magazine . The stories were based on Ramis 's experience in the Zeta Beta Tau fraternity at Washington University in St. Louis , as well as Miller 's experience in the Alpha Delta Phi fraternity at Dartmouth College , and producer Ivan Reitman 's experiences at Delta Upsilon at McMaster University in Hamilton , Ontario . Of the younger lead actors , only John Belushi was an established star , but even he had not yet appeared in a film , having gained fame mainly from his Saturday Night Live television appearances . Several of the actors who were cast as college students , including Karen Allen , Tom Hulce , and Kevin Bacon , were just beginning their film careers , although Tim Matheson had recently appeared as one of the vigilante motorcycle cops in the second Dirty Harry film , Magnum Force .

Upon its initial release , Animal House received generally mixed reviews from critics , but Time and Roger Ebert proclaimed it one of the year 's best . Filmed for \$ 2 @. @ 8 million , it is one of the most profitable movies in history , garnering an estimated gross of more than \$ 141 million in the form of theatrical rentals and home video , not including merchandising .

The film , along with 1977 's The Kentucky Fried Movie , also directed by Landis , was largely responsible for defining and launching the gross @-@ out genre of films , which became one of Hollywood 's staples . It is also now considered one of the greatest comedy films ever made by many fans and critics . In 2001 the United States Library of Congress deemed Animal House " culturally , historically , or aesthetically significant " and selected it for preservation in the National Film Registry . It was No. 1 on Bravo 's " 100 Funniest Movies " . It was No. 36 on AFI 's " 100 Years ... 100 Laughs " list of the 100 best American comedies . In 2008 Empire magazine selected it as one of " The 500 Greatest Movies of All Time " .

= = Plot = =

In 1962 , Faber College freshmen Lawrence " Larry " Kroger and Kent Dorfman seek to join a fraternity . Finding themselves out of place at the prestigious Omega Theta Pi house 's party , they visit the slovenly Delta Tau Chi house next door , where Kent is a " legacy " who cannot be rejected due to his brother having been a member . John " Bluto " Blutarsky welcomes them , and they meet other Deltas , including biker Daniel Simpson " D @-@ Day " Day , ladies ' man Eric " Otter " Stratton , and Otter 's best friend Donald " Boon " Schoenstein , whose girlfriend Katy is constantly pressuring him to stop drinking with the Deltas and do something with his life . Larry and Kent are invited to pledge and given the fraternity names " Pinto " and " Flounder " , respectively , by Bluto , Delta 's sergeant @-@ at @-@ arms .

College Dean Vernon Wormer wants to remove the Deltas , who are already on probation , so he invokes his emergency authority and places the fraternity on " double @-@ secret probation " due to various campus conduct violations and their abysmal academic standing . He directs the clean @-@ cut , smug Omega president Greg Marmalard to find a way for him to remove the Deltas from campus . Various incidents , including the prank @-@ related accidental death of a horse belonging to Omega member and ROTC cadet commander Douglas Neidermeyer , and an attempt by Otter to date Marmalard 's girlfriend , further increase the Dean 's and the Omegas ' animosity toward the Deltas .

Bluto and D @-@ Day steal the answers to an upcoming test from the trash , not realizing that the Omegas have planted a fake set of answers for them to find . The Deltas fail the exam , and their grade @-@ point averages fall so low that Wormer tells them he needs only one more incident to revoke their charter . To cheer themselves up , the Deltas organize a toga party and bring in Otis

Day and the Knights to provide live music . Wormer 's wife attends at Otter 's invitation and has sex with him . Pinto hooks up with Clorette , a girl he met at the supermarket . They make out , but do not have sex because she passes out drunk . Pinto takes her home in a shopping cart and later discovers that she is the mayor 's daughter .

Outraged by his wife 's escapades and the mayor 's threat of personal violence , Wormer organizes a kangaroo court and revokes Delta 's charter . To take their minds off this action , Otter , Boon , Flounder , and Pinto go on a road trip . Otter is successful in picking up four young women from Emily Dickinson College as dates for himself and his Delta brothers . He elicits sympathy by posing as the fiancé of a young woman at the college who died in a recent kiln explosion . They stop at a roadhouse bar where Day 's band is performing , not realizing it has an exclusively African @-@ American clientele . A couple of hulking patrons intimidate the Deltas and they quickly exit , smashing up Flounder 's borrowed car and leaving their dates behind .

Marmalard and other Omegas lure Otter to a motel and beat him up , believing that Otter is having an affair with Marmalard 's girlfriend , Mandy . The Deltas ' midterm grades are so poor that an ecstatic Wormer expels them all , having already notified their local draft boards that they are now eligible for military service . The news shocks Flounder so badly that he vomits on Wormer .

The Deltas are despondent , but Bluto rallies them with an impassioned , if historically inaccurate , speech (" Was it over when the Germans bombed Pearl Harbor ? Hell no ! ") , and so they decide to take action against Wormer , the Omegas , and the college . They convert Flounder 's damaged car into an armored vehicle and hide it inside a cake @-@ shaped breakaway float in order to sneak into the annual homecoming parade . As they wreak havoc on the event , the futures of several of the student main characters are revealed using freeze @-@ frame labels . Most of the Deltas become respectable professionals , while their adversaries suffer less fortunate outcomes .

= = Cast = =

= = = Delta Tau Chi (???) = = =

John Belushi as John " Bluto " Blutarsky : A drunken degenerate with his own style , in his seventh year of college , with a GPA of 0 @. @ 0 . He eventually became a United States senator and married Mandy Pepperidge , a sorority girl .

Tim Matheson as Eric " Otter " Stratton : A confident womanizer whose room is a hotel room look @-@ a @-@ like and a pristine seduction den amid the sheer filth of the rest of the Delta house . Otter is the fraternity 's rush chairman and essentially the fraternity 's unofficial leader . After graduation from Faber in 1963 , he became a gynecologist in Beverly Hills .

Peter Riegert as Donald " Boon " Schoenstein : Otter 's nice @-@ guy best friend , who has to decide between his Delta pals and girlfriend Katy . He marries Katy in 1964 , but they divorce in 1969 . (In the book adaptation Boon becomes a taxi driver and part @-@ time writer in New York City . In Where Are They Now ? , he and Katy got married , divorced , and remarried a final time after a fling resulted in the conception of their son Otis . He also works as a documentarian .)

Thomas Hulce as Lawrence " Pinto " Kroger : A shy but friendly guy and new pledge at Delta with a 1 @. @ 2 GPA . After graduating from Faber in 1966 , he became editor of National Lampoon magazine . (" Pinto " was screenwriter Chris Miller 's nickname at his Dartmouth fraternity .)

Stephen Furst as Kent " Flounder " Dorfman : An overweight , naive , clumsy legacy pledge who is Pinto 's best friend and roommate with a GPA of 0 @. @ 2 . After graduating from Faber in 1966 , he became a sensitivity trainer in Cleveland , Ohio .

Bruce McGill as Daniel Simpson " D @-@ Day " Day : A tough motorcycle biker with no grade point average ; all classes incomplete . Immediately after the Faber homecoming parade fiasco , he leaves town , his subsequent whereabouts unknown .

James Widdoes as Robert Hoover : The affable , level @-@ headed , reasonably clean @-@ cut president of the fraternity , who desperately struggles to maintain a façade of normality to placate the Dean . He is at the top of his fraternity with a 1 @. @ 6 GPA . After graduating from Faber in

1963 , he became a public defender in Baltimore .

Douglas Kenney as " Stork " : A Delta member whose real name is never revealed . He is often seen in the background alongside Bluto and other Deltas . During his first year , Stork was thought to be brain @-@ damaged . He speaks two lines in the entire film . (In the book adaptation , Stork is revealed to be independently wealthy , a result of him holding several patents .)

Chris Miller as Curtis Wayne " Hardbar " Fuller : A Delta member who is often seen in the background . He is best friends with Stork , and has only one line in the film . (He plays a larger role in the " Where Are They Now ? " short , which reveals his real name . " Hardbar " is based on a member of Chris Miller 's fraternity , also sharing his nickname .)

= = = Omega Theta Pi (???) = = =

James Daughton as Gregory " Greg " Marmalard : The president of Omega House and boyfriend of Mandy Pepperidge . After graduation from Faber in 1963 , he became a Nixon White House aide and was subsequently raped in prison in 1974 after being convicted for his involvement in the Watergate scandal .

Mark Metcalf as Douglas C. Neidermeyer : The rush chairman of Omega as well as an Army ROTC cadet officer and scion of a military family who personally hates the Deltas . After graduation from Faber in 1963 , he was commissioned in the U. S. Army and later was killed by his own platoon in Vietnam .

Kevin Bacon as Chip Diller : A smarmy Omega pledge and ROTC cadet , who gets trampled into the pavement during the homecoming parade . (In Where Are They Now ? he became a born @-@ again Christian missionary in Africa .)

= = = Supporting characters = = =

John Vernon as Vernon Wormer : the Dean of Faber College . He wants to revoke the Deltas ' charter and kick them off campus because of their partying ways and poor grade point averages . He will do anything underhanded in his quest to do so . (In Where Are They Now ? he was fired after the homecoming parade debacle and is now residing in a nursing home .)

Verna Bloom as Marion Wormer : The Dean 's alcoholic and neglected wife who briefly hooks up with Otter . A newspaper article reports she has left on a trip to visit Sarasota Springs . (Dean Wormer sends her there to " dry out " at treatment facility .)

Donald Sutherland as Professor Dave Jennings : A bored English professor who tries to turn his students on to left @-@ wing politics and marijuana . (In Where Are They Now ? , it is revealed he became Chairman of Faber 's English Department the same year that Dean Wormer entered the nursing home .)

Karen Allen as Katy : Boon 's frustrated girlfriend who has a dalliance with Jennings but subsequently goes on to marry , then divorce , Boon . (In Where Are They Now ? it is revealed that she and Boon got married , then divorced , and then remarried .)

Sarah Holcomb as Clorette DePasto : The mayor 's 13 @-@ year @-@ old daughter who hooks up with Pinto . (She ends up getting pregnant by him as well .)

DeWayne Jessie as Otis Day : The leader of a R & B band that plays at the toga party and later at the roadhouse bar . (Jessie adopted the " Otis Day " name in his private life and toured with the band) .

Mary Louise Weller as Mandy Pepperidge : A cheerleader and sorority girl who dates Greg , but is not satisfied with the relationship . She is later abducted by Bluto when he throws her into the convertible he uses to drive of town while the homecoming parade debacle unfolds . She ends up marrying Bluto .

Martha Smith as Barbara Sue " Babs " Jansen : A Southern belle cheerleader and Mandy 's best friend who secretly wants Greg for herself . An ally of the Omegas , she finds the Deltas repulsive . After being indecently exposed in public by the Deltas during their homecoming parade disruption , she becomes a tour guide at Universal Studios Hollywood .

Cesare Danova as Mayor Carmine DePasto : The shady local mayor implied to be a crime boss . He controls the town 's police and business , and extorts Wormer in order for the latter to hold Faber 's homecoming parade in the town . (The Animal House book states that he went missing in 1971 , and was rumored to have become " part of the Emil Faber Memorial Highway . ")

Sean McCartin as " Lucky Boy " : The Playboy @-@ reading child who shouts " Thank you , God ! " after a Playboy Bunny flies through his bedroom window onto his bed during the homecoming parade disruption . (McCartin later became pastor of a Eugene church .)

Stephen Bishop as " a Charming Guy with a Guitar " on the stairs at the toga party , who gets his guitar smashed by folk music @-@ hating Bluto .

Blues musician Robert Cray had an uncredited , non @-@ speaking role as a bassist in Otis Day 's band .

Lisa Baur played Shelly Dubinsky , the naive college girl Otter dupes into a date . (Lisa now uses her given name , Cynthia , and owns a candle shop in New Zealand .)

= = Production = =

= = = Development = = =

Animal House was the first film produced by National Lampoon , the most popular humor magazine on college campuses in the mid @-@ 1970s . The periodical specialized in humor , and satirized politics and popular culture . Many of the magazine 's writers were recent college graduates , hence their appeal to students all over the country . Doug Kenney was a Lampoon writer and the magazine 's first editor @-@ in @-@ chief . He graduated from Harvard University in 1969 and had a college experience closer to the Omegas in the film (he had been president of the university 's elite Spee Club) . Kenney was responsible for the first appearances of three characters that would appear in the film , Larry Kroger , Mandy Pepperidge , and Vernon Wormer . They made their debut in 1975 's National Lampoon 's High School Yearbook , a satire of a Middle America 1964 high school yearbook . Kroger 's and Pepperidge 's characters in the yearbook were effectively the same as their characters in the movie , whereas Vernon Wormer was a P. E. and civics teacher as well as an athletic coach in the yearbook .

However , Kenney felt that fellow Lampoon writer Chris Miller was the magazine 's expert on the college experience . Faced with an impending deadline , Miller submitted a chapter from his then @-@ abandoned memoirs entitled " The Night of the Seven Fires " about pledging experiences from his fraternity days in Alpha Delta (associated with the national Alpha Delta Phi during Miller 's undergraduate years , the fraternity subsequently disassociated itself from the national organization and is now called Alpha Delta) at the Ivy League 's Dartmouth College , in Hanover , New Hampshire . The antics of his fellow fraternities , coupled with experiences like that of a road trip to UMass Amherst and its Delta Chi Fraternity , became the inspiration for the Delta Tau Chis of Animal House and many characters in the film (and their nicknames) were based on Miller 's fraternity brothers . Filmmaker Ivan Reitman had just finished producing David Cronenberg 's first film , Shivers , and called the magazine 's publisher Matty Simmons about making movies under the Lampoon banner . Reitman had put together The National Lampoon Show in New York City featuring several future Saturday Night Live cast members , including John Belushi . When most of the Lampoon group moved on to SNL except for Harold Ramis , Reitman approached him with an idea to make a film together using some skits from the Lampoon Show .

= = = Screenplay = = =

Kenney met Lampoon writer Ramis at the suggestion of Simmons . Ramis drew from his own fraternity experiences as a member of Zeta Beta Tau fraternity at Washington University in St. Louis and was working on a film treatment about college called " Freshman Year " , but the magazine 's editors were not happy with it . Kenney and Ramis started working on a new film treatment together

, positing Charles Manson in a high school , calling it Laser Orgy Girls . Simmons was cool to this idea so they changed the setting to a " northeastern college ... Ivy League kind of school " . Kenney was a fan of Miller ' s fraternity stories and suggested using them as a basis for a movie . Kenney , Miller and Ramis began brainstorming ideas . They saw the film ' s 1962 setting as " the last innocent year ... of America " , and the homecoming parade that ends the film as occurring on November 21 , 1963 , the day before President Kennedy ' s assassination . They agreed that Belushi should star in it and Ramis wrote the part of Bluto specifically for the comedian , having been friends with him while at Chicago ' s The Second City .

The writers were new to screenwriting , so their film treatment ran to 110 @-@ pages , the average was 15 pages . Reitman and Simmons pitched it to various Hollywood studios . Simmons met with Ned Tanen , an executive at Universal Studios . He was encouraged by younger executives Sean Daniel and Thom Mount who were more receptive to the Lampoon type of humor ; Mount had discovered the " Seven Fires " film treatment as Tanen ' s assistant , while investigating projects left by a fired studio executive . Tanen hated the idea . Ramis remembers , " We went further than I think Universal expected or wanted . I think they were shocked and appalled . Chris ' fraternity had virtually been a vomiting cult . And we had a lot of scenes that were almost orgies of vomit ... We didn ' t back off anything " . As the writers created more drafts of the screenplay (nine in total) , the studio gradually became more receptive to the project , especially Mount , who championed it . Surprisingly , the studio green @-@ lighted the film and set the budget at a modest \$ 3 million . Simmons remembers , " They just figured , ' Screw it , it ' s a silly little movie , and we ? ll make a couple of bucks if we ' re lucky ? let them do whatever they want . ' "

= = = Casting = = =

Initially , Reitman had wanted to direct but had made only one film , Cannibal Girls , for \$ 5 @,@ 000 . The film ' s producers approached Richard Lester and Bob Rafelson before considering John Landis , who got the director job based on his work on Kentucky Fried Movie . That film ' s script and continuity supervisor was the girlfriend of Sean Daniel , an assistant to Mount . Daniel saw Landis ' movie and recommended him . Landis then met with Mount , Reitman and Simmons and got the job . Landis remembers , " When I was given the script , it was the funniest thing I had ever read up to that time . But it was really offensive . There was a great deal of projectile vomiting and rape and all these things " . There was also friction between Landis and the writers early on because Landis was a high @-@ school dropout from Hollywood and they were college graduates from the East Coast . Ramis remembers , " He sort of referred immediately to Animal House as ' my movie . ' We ' d been living with it for two years and we hated that " . According to Landis , he drew inspiration from classic Hollywood comedies featuring the likes of Buster Keaton , Harold Lloyd , and the Marx Brothers .

The initial cast was to feature Chevy Chase as Otter , Bill Murray as Boon , Brian Doyle @-@ Murray as Hoover , Dan Aykroyd as D @-@ Day , and John Belushi as Bluto , but only Belushi wanted to do it . Chase was a star from Saturday Night Live , which had recently become a cultural phenomenon . His name would have added credibility to the project , but he turned the film down to do Foul Play ; Landis , who wanted to cast unknown dramatic actors such as Bacon and Allen (the first film for both) instead of famous comedians , takes credit for subtly discouraging Chase by describing the film as an " ensemble " . Landis has also stated that he was not interested in directing a Saturday Night Live movie and that unknowns would be the better choice . The character of D @-@ Day was based on Aykroyd , who was a motorcycle aficionado . Aykroyd was offered the part , but he was already committed to Saturday Night Live . Belushi , who had worked on The National Lampoon Radio Hour before Saturday Night Live , was also committed to the show , but spent Monday through Wednesday making the film and then flying back to New York to do the show on Thursday through Saturday . Ramis originally wrote the role of Boon for himself , but Landis felt that he looked too old for the part and Riegert was cast instead . Landis did offer Ramis a smaller part , but he declined . Landis met with Jack Webb to play Dean Wormer and Kim Novak to play his wife . Webb ultimately backed out due to concerns over his clean @-@ cut image , and was replaced by John Vernon .

Belushi received only \$ 35 @, @ 000 for Animal House , with a bonus after it became a hit . Landis also met with Meat Loaf in case Belushi did not want to play Bluto . Landis worked with Belushi on his character , who " hardly had any dialogue " ; they decided that Bluto was a cross between Harpo Marx and the Cookie Monster . Despite Belushi 's presence , he was considered a supporting actor and Universal wanted another star .

Landis had been a crew member on Kelly 's Heroes and had become friends with actor Donald Sutherland , sometimes babysitting his son Kiefer . Landis asked Sutherland , one of the biggest stars of the 1970s , to be in the film . For two days work , Sutherland declined the initial offer of \$ 20 @, @ 000 plus " points " (a percentage of the gross or net income) . Universal then offered him either a set amount (\$ 25 @, @ 000 or \$ 35 @, @ 000) or 2 % of the film 's gross , assuming that the movie would be quickly forgotten . Sutherland took the guaranteed money ; although this made him the highest @-@ paid member of the cast (other than Neidemeyer 's horse) , the decision cost Sutherland what he estimates as \$ 14 million . The star 's participation , however , was crucial ; Landis later said " It was Donald Sutherland who essentially got the film made . "

= = = Locations = = =

The filmmakers ' next problem was finding a college that would let them shoot the film on their campus . They submitted the script to a number of colleges and universities but " nobody wanted this movie " due to the script ; according to Landis , " I couldn 't find ' the look ' . Every place that had ' the look ' said , ' no thank you . ' "

The president of the University of Oregon in Eugene , William Beaty Boyd , had been a senior administrator of a major California university when his campus was considered for a location of the film The Graduate . After he consulted with other senior administrative colleagues who advised him to turn it down due to the lack of artistic merit , production moved to Berkeley and USC . The Graduate went on to become a classic , and Boyd was determined not to make the same mistake twice when the producers inquired about filming at Oregon . After consulting with student government leaders and officers of the Pan Hellenic Council , the Director of University Relations advised the president that the script , although raunchy and often tasteless , was a very funny spoof of college life . Boyd even allowed the filmmakers to use his office as Dean Wormer 's .

The actual house depicted as the Delta House was originally a residence in Eugene , the Dr. A.W. Patterson House . Around 1959 , it was acquired by the Psi Deuteron chapter of Phi Sigma Kappa fraternity and was their chapter house until 1967 , when the chapter was closed due to low membership . The house was sold and slid into disrepair , with the spacious porch removed and the lawn graveled over . At the time of the shooting , the Phi Kappa Psi and Sigma Nu fraternity houses sat next to the old Phi Sigma Kappa house . The interior of the Phi Kappa Psi house and the Sigma Nu house were used for many of the interior scenes , but the individual rooms were filmed on a soundstage . The Patterson house was demolished in 1986 . The site is now occupied by Northwest Christian University 's school of Education and Counseling . A large boulder placed to the west of the parking entrance displays a bronze plaque commemorating the Delta House location . The parade scene takes place in downtown Cottage Grove , Oregon on Main Street .

= = = Principal photography = = =

Landis brought the actors who played the Deltas up five days early in order to bond . Staying at the Rodeway Inn they moved an old piano from the lobby into McGill 's room , which became known as " party central " . Actor James Widdoes remembers , " It was like freshman orientation . There was a lot of getting to know each other and calling each other by our character names " . This tactic encouraged the actors playing the Deltas to separate themselves from the actors playing the Omegas , helping generate authentic animosity between them on camera . Belushi and his wife , Judy , had a house in the suburbs in order to keep him away from alcohol and drugs .

Although the cast members were warned against mixing with the college students , one night , some girls invited several of the cast members to a fraternity party . They arrived assuming they had

been invited and were greeted with open hostility . As they were leaving , Widdoes threw a cup of beer at a group of drunk football players and a fight " like a scene from the movie " broke out . Tim Matheson , Bruce McGill , Peter Riegert , and Widdoes narrowly escaped , with McGill suffering a black eye and Widdoes getting several teeth knocked out .

Other than Belushi 's opening yell , the food fight was filmed in one shot , with the actors encouraged to fight for real . Flounder 's groceries handling in the supermarket was another single shot ; Furst deftly caught the many items Landis and Matheson threw at him , amazing the director . By filming the long courtroom scene in one day Landis won a bet with Reitman .

The film 's budget was so small that during the 32 days of shooting in Eugene , Landis had no trailer or office and could not watch dailies for three weeks . His wife Deborah Nadoolman purchased most of the costumes at local thrift stores , and she and Judy Belushi made the party togas . Landis and Bruce McGill staged a scene for reporters visiting the set where the director pretended to be angry at the actor for being difficult on the set . Landis grabbed a breakaway pitcher and smashed it over McGill 's head . He fell to the ground and pretended to be unconscious . The reporters were completely fooled , and when Landis asked McGill to get up , he refused to move .

Black extras had to be bused in from Portland for the segment at the Dexter Lake Club due to their scarcity around Eugene . More seriously , the segment alarmed Tanen and other studio executives , who perceived it as racist and warned that " ' black people in America are going to rip the seats out of theaters if you leave that scene in the movie . ' " Richard Pryor 's approval helped retain the segment in the film . The studio became more enthusiastic about the film when Reitman showed executives and sales managers of various regions in the country a 10 @-@ minute production reel that was put together in two days . The reaction was positive and the studio sent 20 copies out to exhibitors . The first preview screening for Animal House was held in Denver four months before it opened nationwide . The crowd loved it and the filmmakers realized they had a potential hit on their hands .

Original cut of the movie was 175 minutes long . Some of the deleted scenes include ; John Landis cameo scene where he plays dishwasher who tries to stop Bluto from eating all the food and gets pulled across the table and thrown on the floor by Bluto who then says " You don 't fuck with the eagles unless you know how to fly . " Scene where Boon and Hoover tell Pinto the tales of legendary Delta House frat brothers from years before who had names like Tarantula , Bulldozer , Giraffe , and his girlfriend , Gross Kay . Two different deleted scenes with Otter and couple of his girlfriends , one was played by Sunny Johnson who is listed in the credits as " Otter 's Co @-@ Ed " although her scene was deleted , and other one was played by location scout Katherine Wilson and her deleted scene can be seen in theatrical trailer . Extended version of the scene where Bluto pours mustard on himself and starts singing " I am the Mustard Man . " Deltas going through a medical screening after having to register for the draft after being expelled , during the screening D @-@ Day turns his feet around backwards because his ankles are double @-@ jointed , this scene was removed a few months after release due to many young men hurting themselves while trying to emulate him .

= = Soundtrack and score = =

The soundtrack is a mix of rock and roll and rhythm and blues with the original score created by film composer Elmer Bernstein , who had been a Landis family friend since John Landis was a child . Bernstein was easily persuaded to score the film , but was not sure what to make of it . Similar to his preferring dramatic actors for the comedy , Landis asked Bernstein to score it as though it were serious . He adapted the " Faber College Theme " from the Academic Festival Overture by Brahms , and said that the film opened yet another door in his diverse career , to scoring comedies .

The soundtrack was released as a vinyl album in 1978 , and then as a CD in 1998 .

Soundtrack album listing

Additional music in the film

" Theme from A Summer Place " , composed by Max Steiner ; performed by Percy Faith and his Orchestra

" Who 's Sorry Now ? " , written by Ted Snyder , Bert Kalmar and Harry Ruby ; performed by Connie Francis

" The Washington Post March " , composed by John Philip Sousa

" Tammy " , by Jay Livingston and Ray Evans

= = Reception = =

In its opening weekend , Animal House grossed \$ 276 @, @ 538 in 12 theaters . It grossed \$ 120 @. @ 1 million in North America and went on to achieve a domestic lifetime gross of \$ 141 @. @ 6 million .

= = = Critical reception = = =

At the time of its release , Animal House received mixed reviews from critics but several immediately recognized its appeal , and it has since been recognized as one of the best films of 1978 . The film holds a 91 % positive rating on the review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes . Roger Ebert gave the film four stars out of four and wrote , " It 's anarchic , messy , and filled with energy . It assaults us . Part of the movie 's impact comes from its sheer level of manic energy But the movie 's better made (and better acted) than we might at first realize . It takes skill to create this sort of comic pitch , and the movie 's filled with characters that are sketched a little more absorbingly than they had to be , and acted with perception " . Ebert later placed the film on his 10 best list of 1978 , the only National Lampoon film to have received this honor . In his review for Time , Frank Rich wrote , " At its best it perfectly expresses the fears and loathings of kids who came of age in the late ' 60s ; at its worst Animal House revels in abject silliness . The hilarious highs easily compensate for the puerile lows " . Gary Arnold wrote in his review for The Washington Post , " Belushi also controls a wicked array of conspiratorial expressions with the audience He can seem irresistibly funny in repose or invest minor slapstick opportunities with a streak of genius " . David Ansen wrote in Newsweek , " But if Animal House lacks the inspired tastelessness of the Lampoon 's High School Yearbook Parody , this is still low humor of a high order " . Robert Martin wrote in The Globe and Mail , " It is so gross and tasteless you feel you should be disgusted but it 's hard to be offended by something that is so sidesplittingly funny " . Time magazine proclaimed Animal House one of the year 's best .

When the film was released , Landis , Widdoes and Allen went on a national promotional tour . Universal Pictures spent about \$ 4 @. @ 5 million promoting the film at selected college campuses and helped students organize their own toga parties . One such party at the University of Maryland attracted some 2 @, @ 000 people , while students at the University of Wisconsin ? Madison tried for a crowd of 10 @, @ 000 people and a place in the Guinness Book of World Records . Thanks to the film , toga parties became one of the favorite college campus happenings during 1978 and 1979 .

= = = American Film Institute Lists = = =

AFI 's 100 Years ... 100 Movies ? Nominated

AFI 's 100 Years ... 100 Laughs ? # 36

AFI 's 100 Years ... 100 Songs :

Shout ? Nominated

AFI 's 100 Years ... 100 Movie Quotes :

" Toga ! Toga ! " ? # 82

" Over ? Did you say ' over ? ' Nothing is over until we decide it is ! Was it over when the Germans bombed Pearl Harbor ? Hell , no ! " ? Nominated

" Fat , drunk , and stupid is no way to go through life , son . " ? Nominated

AFI 's 100 Years ... 100 Movies (10th Anniversary Edition) ? Nominated

= = Spin @- @ offs = =

The film inspired a short @-@ lived half @-@ hour ABC television sitcom , Delta House , in which Vernon reprised his role as the long @-@ suffering , malevolent Dean Wormer . The series also included Furst as Flounder , McGill as D @-@ Day , and Widdoes as Hoover . The pilot episode was written by the film 's screenwriters , Kenney , Miller , and Ramis . Michelle Pfeiffer made her acting debut in the series (playing a new character , " Bombshell ") , and Peter Fox was cast as Otter . Belushi 's character from the film , John " Bluto " Blutarsky , is in the army , but his brother , Blotto , played by Josh Mostel , transfers to Faber to carry on Bluto 's tradition .

Animal House inspired Co @-@ Ed Fever , another sitcom but without the involvement of the film 's producers or cast . Set in a dorm of the formerly all @-@ female Baxter College , the pilot of Co @-@ Ed Fever was aired by CBS on February 4 , 1979 , but the network canceled the series before airing any more episodes . NBC also had its Animal House @-@ inspired sitcom , Brothers and Sisters , in which three members of Crandall College 's Pi Nu fraternity interact with members of the Gamma Iota sorority . Like ABC 's Delta House , Brothers and Sisters lasted only three months .

The film 's writers planned a film sequel set in 1967 (the so @-@ called " Summer of Love ") , in which the Deltas have a reunion for Pinto 's marriage in Haight @-@ Ashbury , San Francisco . The only Delta to have become a hippie is Flounder , who is now called Pisces . Later , Chris Miller and John Weidman , another Lampoon writer , created a treatment for this screenplay , but Universal rejected it because the sequel to American Graffiti , which contained some hippie @-@ 1967 sequences , had not done well . When John Belushi died , the idea was indefinitely shelved .

A second attempt at a sequel was made in 1982 with producer Matty Simmons co @-@ authoring a script which saw some of the Deltas returning to Faber College five years after the events of the film . The project got no further than a first draft script dated May 6 , 1982 .

= = Where Are They Now ? = =

The 2003 " Double Secret Probation Edition " DVD included a short film , Where Are They Now ? : A Delta Alumni Update , a mockumentary purporting that the original film had been a documentary and Landis was catching up with some of the cast (played by their original actors) . It was never shown theatrically .

It shows the main Animal House characters 30 years on , following Landis to cities all over America in search of the former Deltas , Omegas , and Dean Wormer , and describes the various locales and professions the characters have settled into :

Donald Schoenstein ? Film editor , New York City . Currently in his third marriage to Katy . He has a son named Otis .

Babs Jansen ? Tour guide , Universal Studios Hollywood . She mentions to Landis that she is organizing an upcoming Faber reunion , and seems to be successful at her job .

Marion Wormer ? Seemingly unemployed in Chicago . She tells Landis of how her husband Vernon accepted the blame for the parade debacle , and was subsequently fired , leading to their divorce . She becomes progressively more tipsy throughout the interview , eventually falling off her chair .

Kent Dorfman ? Executive director , Encounter Groups of Cleveland , Inc . , Cleveland , Ohio . He recalls trying to diet during the 1970s with a special program requiring him to shoot up the urine of pregnant women .

Robert Hoover ? Assistant district attorney , Baltimore , Maryland . Hoover tells the tale of how he quit being a public defender after he realized many of his clients were insane . He also boasts of how his legal advice was sought during the O.J. Simpson murder case .

Chip Diller ? Landis receives a letter from Diller , who is currently serving as a missionary in Africa . He recalls how he was prevented from going to Vietnam as his father was a prime donor to several right @-@ wing political campaigns . When he learned of Doug Neidermeyer 's fragging in Vietnam , he fell into alcoholism and despair . When he began seeing Jesus in his food , he became a born @-@ again Christian and fell into his current profession as minister and missionary .

Dean Vernon Wormer ? Wormer is seen at a nursing home in Florida , under the watchful eye of a male nurse . He appears to be senile , not recognizing Landis at first (calling him " Larry ") , and not

remembering his tenure as Dean of Faber . When Landis mentions the Deltas , Wormer erupts into a violent , profanity @-@ laced tirade against the boys who cost him his job . He lashes out against the nurse and then physically attacks Landis , knocking out the camera in the process .

Eric Stratton ? Gynecologist , Beverly Hills , California . Otter is depicted as still being the affable , suave gentleman he was in his college days . He remarks that gynecology has been very enjoyable for him and that he has straightened up a bit since leaving Faber . An attractive , blonde patient in her underwear then tells Otter she 's ready for her examination . Otter politely cuts the interview off and goes into the exam room .

Daniel Simpson Day ? Landis remarks in a voiceover that D @-@ Day has been the hardest to track down for the documentary , saying that rumors have flown around , with his whereabouts ranging from a Buddhist monastery in Nepal to the Yukon Territory . Landis eventually approaches a house in Modesto , California , where a man opens the door by a crack and claims , in a Hispanic accent , " I don 't know no D @-@ Day person ! I don 't know him ! " He slams the door in Landis ' face and then bursts out of the garage in a car . He pulls out onto the street to the strains of the William Tell Overture , gives a manic laugh exactly like D @-@ Day 's , and speeds off .

John Blutarsky ? In a final voice @-@ over a shot of the White House , Landis remarks that the viewers all know what happened to Bluto and Mandy Pepperidge : they became the President of the United States and First Lady of the United States .

= = Home media = =

Animal House became one of the most profitable films in history . Since its initial release , the film has garnered an estimated return of more than \$ 141 million in the form of video and DVDs , not including merchandising .

Animal House was released on videodisc in 1979 . It was released on VHS in 1980 , 1983 , 1988 , and 1990 . In 1992 , it was released in a 2 pack VHS Set that included The Blues Brothers . It was first released on DVD in February 1998 in a " bare bones " full screen presentation . A 20th anniversary widescreen Collector 's Edition DVD and a coinciding THX special edition VHS and a widescreen Signature Collection Laserdisc was released later that year , with a 45 @-@ minute documentary entitled " The Yearbook ? An Animal House Reunion " by producer JM Kenny with production notes , theatrical trailer , and new interviews with director Landis , writers Harold Ramis and Chris Miller , composer Elmer Bernstein , and stars Tim Matheson , Karen Allen , Stephen Furst , John Vernon , Verna Bloom , Bruce McGill , James Widdoes , Peter Riegert , Mark Metcalf and Kevin Bacon . In 2000 , the collector 's edition DVD was packaged along with The Blues Brothers and 1941 in a John Belushi 3 pack box set . The " Double Secret Probation Edition " DVD released in 2003 features cast members reprising their respective roles in a " Where Are They Now ? " mockumentary , which posited the original film as a documentary . One major change shown in this mockumentary from the epilogue of the original film is that Bluto went on from his career in the U.S. Senate to become the President of the United States , with a voiceover on a shot of the north portico of the White House , since by then Belushi had died . This DVD also includes " Did You Know That ? Universal Animated Anecdotes " , a subtitle trivia track , the making of documentary from the Collector 's Edition , MXPX " Shout " music video , a theatrical trailer , production notes , and cast and filmmakers biographies . In August 2006 , the film was released on an HD DVD / DVD combo disc , which featured the film in a 1080p high @-@ definition format on one side , and a standard @-@ definition format on the opposite side . Along with the film Unleashed , Animal House was one of Universal 's first two HD / DVD combo releases , but was later discontinued in 2008 after Universal decided to switch to the Blu @-@ ray Disc format following the conclusion of the high definition optical disc format war .

It is currently available on Blu @-@ ray .

= = Precursors and legacy = =

Animal House was a great box office success despite its limited production costs and started an

industry trend , inspiring countless other comedies such as Porky 's , the Police Academy films , the American Pie films , and Old School among others . Belushi became the most successful male comedy star in the world until his 1982 death ; Bacon also became a star , and he , Matheson , and Allen are among those who have had lengthy acting careers . Reitman , Landis , and Ramis became successful filmmakers ; Landis ' use of dramatic actors and soundtrack to make the comedy believable became the traditional approach for film comedies .

On the left @-@ wing and counterculture side , the film included references to topical political matters like Kent State shootings , President Harry S. Truman 's decision to drop atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki , Richard Nixon , the Vietnam war , and the civil rights movement . Precursors of this counterculture subversive humor in film were two non- " college movies " , M * A * S * H , a 1970 satirical dark comedy , and The Kentucky Fried Movie , a 1977 formless comedy consisting of a series of sketches (which was also directed by Landis) .

In 2012 Universal Pictures Stage Productions announced it was developing a stage musical version of the movie . Barenaked Ladies were originally announced to write the score , but they were replaced by composer David Yazbek . Casey Nicholaw will direct ; author Michael Mitnick is also reportedly involved .

In 2001 the United States Library of Congress deemed the film culturally significant and selected it for preservation in the National Film Registry . Animal House is first on Bravo 's 100 Funniest Movies . In 2000 , the American Film Institute ranked the film No. 36 on 100 Years ... 100 Laughs , a list of the 100 best American comedies . In 2006 , Miller wrote a more comprehensive memoir of his experiences in Dartmouth 's AD house in a book entitled , The Real Animal House : The Awesomely Depraved Saga of the Fraternity That Inspired the Movie , in which Miller recounts hijinks that were considered too risqué for the movie . In 2008 , Empire magazine selected Animal House as one of The 500 Greatest Movies of All Time . The film was also selected by The New York Times as one of The 1000 Best Movies Ever Made .