



Sleeping Dogs Lie

Bobcat Goldthwait

USA, 2006
English

89 minutes ■ Colour/35mm
Production Company:

Harebrained Pictures

Executive Producer: **Marty Pasetta, Jr.,**

Bobcat Goldthwait

Producer: **Marty Pasetta, Jr.**

Screenplay: **Bobcat Goldthwait**

Cinematographer: **Ian S. Takahashi**

Editor: **Jason Stewart**

Production Designer: **Melanie Mandl**

Sound: **Ryan Rees, Gerald Brunskill**

Music: **Gerald Brunskill**

Principal Cast: **Melinda Page Hamilton,**

Bryce Johnson, Colby French,

Geoff Pierson, Bonita Friedericy,

Jack Plotnick

Production: **Harebrained Pictures,**
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CONTACT INFORMATION:

Canadian Distributor: **Odeon Films**
US Distributor: **Roadside Attractions/
Samuel Goldwyn Company**
Foreign Sales Agent:
Gaumont International

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Following the premiere screening of *Sleeping Dogs Lie* this past January, a strange wave of shock washed over the audience. Perhaps attendees were expecting to see a Bobcat Goldthwait take on a Farrelly Brothers comedy; what they got instead was a tough and brutally honest morality play. The film's constant questioning of how and when to employ deceit shares a complexity with the difficult Shakespearean comedies; its intellectual tug-of-war between intuitive personal morality and rational ethical behavior echoes the concerns of Scottish philosopher David Hume.

It's also a very funny comedy about the consequences of a woman admitting to a brief sexual experience with a dog.

We get a mercifully modest flashback to that moment early on as Goldthwait introduces us to Amy (a wonderfully insouciant Melinda Page Hamilton) and her handsome and caring boyfriend, John (Bryce Johnson). Having lived with Amy for some time, John insists that the final hurdle of intimacy they must cross involves revealing their darkest secrets to one another. Amy is reluctant, making John increasingly irritable and jealous.

During a visit to her parents' house, she talks with her hyper-Christian mother (Bonita Friedericy) about John's request; she advises Amy to withhold. Perhaps seeing the dysfunction of her parents' relationship, or caught up in the intimacy of the moment, she reveals the truth to a horrified John and, unbeknownst to both of them, her crack-head brother Dougie (Jack Plotnick), who is

hiding in the garage. As Amy's relationships with John and her family unravel, *Sleeping Dogs Lie* takes on layers of complexity – and gleeful, farcical absurdity – as she finds her way to a personal resolution of her past, with help from unexpected quarters.

Shot for little more than a credit-card overdraft, *Sleeping Dogs Lie* has a disconcertingly flat and sunny visual look, a fifties trope that speaks to the film's hatred of false consciousness. The eerie accordion riff that forms its musical backdrop also keeps us on edge. They are fittingly quixotic frames for a unique piece of cinema.

■ Noah Cowan

Bobcat Goldthwait was born in Syracuse, New York and began doing stand-up comedy at the age of fifteen. Beginning in the mid-eighties, he achieved tremendous success as an actor, appearing in dozens of films, including his directorial debut, *Shakes the Clown* (92). He has since directed several TV shows and two additional features, *Windy City Heat* (04) and *Sleeping Dogs Lie* (06).