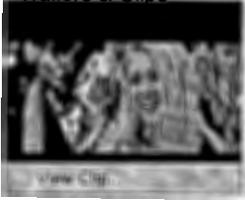


FILM IN REVIEW

Soul Surfer (2011)**'Soul Surfer' Is Bethany Hamilton's Shark Tale**By ANDY WEBSTER
Published: April 7, 2011

Make no mistake, "Soul Surfer" celebrates Christianity. The church is a somewhat stealthy supporting player within the film, based on the true tale of [Bethany Hamilton](#), the rising 13-year-old amateur competition surfer in Hawaii who in 2003 lost an arm to a shark. But the piety takes a backseat to the welcome glimmers of grit. As a portrait of a spirited, resilient athlete, the movie succeeds best, unafraid to face its heroine's daunting challenges directly.

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After scenes introducing its characters, including Bethany's surfer parents ([Dennis Quaid](#) and [Helen Hunt](#), both excellent), Bethany ([AnnaSophia Robb](#)) is attacked in Hanalei and raced to a hospital. (The sequence, while gore free, is agonizing and not for young children.) From there the film presents her efforts to get back in competition; her fitful, painful setbacks; and a lesson in context when she helps tsunami victims on a volunteer church expedition to Thailand. Ms. Hunt and Mr. Quaid may be a surprising presence here, but not the country singer [Carrie Underwood](#), as a saintly youth counselor.

The movie dazzles in its surfing sequences, in which the director, [Sean McNamara](#), works nimble editing and a tropical palette to a fine sheen. And Ms. Robb makes an appealing Bethany, wounded but determined and largely self-reliant. During the closing credits the real Ms. Hamilton appears on screen and thanks Jesus in voice-over. While this story is certainly about faith, "Soul Surfer" is most inspiring when it exalts faith in one's self.

"Soul Surfer" is rated PG (Parental guidance suggested). It has an intense attack-and-rescue sequence.

Directed by [Sean McNamara](#); written by Mr. McNamara, [Deborah Schwartz](#), [Douglas Schwartz](#) and [Michael Berk](#), based on the book by [Bethany Hamilton](#), [Sheryl Berk](#) and [Rick Bundschuh](#) and a screen story by Mr. McNamara, Ms. Schwartz, Mr. Schwartz, Mr. Berk, [Matt R. Allen](#), [Caleb Wilson](#) and [Brad Gann](#); director of photography, [John Leonetti](#); edited by [Jeff Canavan](#); production design by [Rusty Smith](#); costumes by [Kathe James](#); produced by Mr. McNamara, Mr. Schwartz, [David Brookwell](#), [Roy \(Dutch\) Hofstetter](#) and [David Zelon](#); released by [TriStar](#) and [Film District](#). Running time: 1 hour 46 minutes.

WITH: [AnnaSophia Robb](#) ([Bethany Hamilton](#)), [Dennis Quaid](#) ([Tom Hamilton](#)), [Helen Hunt](#) ([Cheri Hamilton](#)), [Carrie Underwood](#) ([Sarah Hill](#)), [Kevin Sorbo](#) ([Holt Blanchard](#)), [Lorraine Nicholson](#) ([Alana Blanchard](#)), [Jeremy Sumpter](#) ([Byron](#)), [Ross Thomas](#) ([Noah Hamilton](#)), [Sonya Balmores Chung](#) ([Malina Birch](#)) and [Chris Brochu](#) ([Timmy](#)).

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T



Mario Perez/FilmDistrict and TriStar Pictures
Dennis Quaid, and AnnaSophia Robb
in "Soul Surfer."

Los Angeles Times

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Movie review: 'Soul Surfer'

Faith, fate and surfing are entwined in this coming-of-age story about shark-attack victim Bethany Hamilton.

April 08, 2011 | By Glenn Whipp, Special to the Los Angeles Times

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"Soul Surfer" begins like most other coming-of-age movie dramas. A young heroine, surfer girl Bethany Hamilton (AnnaSophia Robb), sketches out the details of her sunny life in a quick voice-over. She lives on the Hawaiian island of Kauai, has a loving family and, from the moment she rode her first wave, knew she wanted to be a pro surfer.

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"It's my passion, my way of life," Bethany says with matter-of-fact conviction.

We then see Bethany practicing her passion in the Pacific and next thing you know, she's slipping on a sundress and (wait a minute, what's this?) joining her family at an outdoor church service, where Carrie Underwood, playing a youth group leader, is singing. And five minutes in, even if you don't know Hamilton's rather remarkable story, you realize the conflict in this movie might not come from a boy or a parent or from buying the wrong bikini.

It's going to come from God, and it's going to address the timeless question of why bad things happen to good people.

Now, before we get too existential here, realize that the people posing the question in "Soul Surfer" are

the creative folks behind "Baywatch," the live-action "Bratz" movie and innumerable Disney Channel sitcoms. That "Soul Surfer" rates as a giant leap for this team speaks well about the conviction the movie's actors bring to the material as well as the respect afforded the Hamiltons and their faith.

The Hamiltons' lives were shaken when a 14-foot tiger shark ripped off Bethany's arm during a morning surf nearly eight years ago. She lost 60% of her blood, but survived. Recovering, Bethany discovered she lost something else that day — her identity as an up-and-coming surfer.

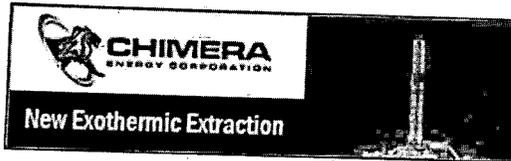
"How could this be God's plan for me?" Bethany asks. Her parents, played with tremendous feeling by Dennis Quaid and Helen Hunt, offer support but also know that their daughter will need time and space to work through her issues of image and faith.

True, there's not a lot of grappling or many dark nights of the soul on display here. Part of this is a function of the writers' (four are credited) penchant for mining the most obvious aspects of Hamilton's story in ways that sometimes feel rushed. But if you've seen the real-life Hamilton on the ESPYs or Nickelodeon's Teen Choice awards, you know she's as much a force of nature as the waves she rides.

And yes, that's Hamilton, or at least her body, performing most of her own surfing scenes. L.A.-based effects company Engine Room later morphed Robb's head onto Hamilton's body, and digitally removed one of Robb's arms throughout the film. As for the shark attack, you don't see much, and it's over in six minutes.

"Soul Surfer" owns its PG rating, not to mention its Christian themes, proudly.

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SOUL SURFER (PG)

Ebert: ★★★ Users: ★★★ You: Rate this movie right now



Soul Surfer

BY ROGER EBERT / April 7, 2011

"Soul Surfer" is based on the true story of Bethany Hamilton, a champion surfer who in her early teens was attacked by a shark and lost almost all of her left arm. One month later, she was back on a surfboard, has since won several championships and is at age 21 a professional surfer. All of those are remarkable facts.

My problem with "Soul Surfer" is that it makes it look too simple. Bethany (AnnaSophia Robb) has a loving family of professional surfers and a big, friendly dog. She lives in walking distance of the beach. She was and is a committed churchgoer and got great support from her spiritual leaders. She was an indomitable optimist with a fierce competitive spirit.

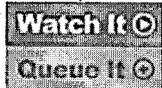
But there had to be more to it than that. I applaud her faith and spirit. I give her full credit for her determination. I realize she is a great athlete. But I feel something is missing. There had to be dark nights of the soul. Times of grief and rage. The temptation of nihilism. The lure of despair. Can a 13-year-old girl lose an arm and keep right on smiling?

The flaw in the storytelling strategy of "Soul Surfer" is that it doesn't make Bethany easy to identify with. She's almost eerie in her optimism. Her religious faith is so unshaken, it feels taken for granted. The film feels more like an inspirational parable than a

cast & credits

Bethany Hamilton AnnaSophia Robb
Cheri Hamilton Helen Hunt
Tom Hamilton Dennis Quaid
Alana Blanchard Lorraine Nicholson
Sarah Hill Carrie Underwood
Dr. Rovinsky Craig T. Nelson

Film District/TriStar Pictures presents a film directed by Sean McNamara. Written by McNamara, Deborah Schwartz, Douglas Schwartz and Michael Berk, based on the book by Bethany Hamilton. Running time: 106 minutes. Rated PG (for an intense accident sequence and some thematic material).



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harrowing story of personal tragedy.

Even its portrait of her recovery and rehabilitation is perfunctory. There's a particularly unconvincing scene where she's fitted with a prosthetic arm and refuses to wear it. They're making remarkable progress in the field of prosthetics. But the arm that she's offered looks no more useful than the arm that she rips off her Barbie doll the same night (in one of the movie's rare moments of depression).

Although I can understand a good prosthetic might not help her balance on a surfboard, I believe one might be of use in other situations — and I don't mean cosmetically. Maybe I'm mistaken.

Because Bethany actually was in the water a month after the attack, there can be no quarrel with those scenes in the film. What I missed was more information about her medical condition. What did her doctors advise? What risks were there to the wound? Having totaled almost a year in three trips through the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, I've known people who lost limbs and I know it's very difficult and complicated. Maybe Bethany was so young and resilient, and in such a happy situation with her family and her church, that it was this easy for her. But the movie feels too simple.

One of the best sequences in the film involves a trip that her church group makes to Thailand to bring aid and supplies to the survivors of a tsunami. This episode looks so realistic, it's uncanny. It has one detail that made me smile: Bethany packs cans of Spam for the victims. I don't know how you feel about Spam, but I know that in Hawaii, it's considered one of the basic food groups. (I like it with Colman's English Mustard — but I'm drifting.)

"Soul Surfer" is a wholesome movie, intended as inspirational. Whether it will cheer viewers who are not as capable as Bethany is an excellent question. AnnaSophia Robb is a convincing, cheerful heroine. Dennis Quaid and Helen Hunt, as Bethany's parents, are stalwart and supportive, although the script indeed leaves them with no other choice.

One character I question is Malina Birch (Sonya Balmores), one of Bethany's competitors, who sneers and is mean and does cruel things and, of course, always wears black. Why? Does she know that she has been cast as the villain?

Soul Surfer (film)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Soul Surfer is a 2011 American drama film about the life of surfer Bethany Hamilton. At the age of 13, Hamilton lost her arm to a shark attack. The film details the events surrounding this attack and her struggle during the aftermath. The film is directed by Sean McNamara, who based the screenplay on Hamilton's autobiography of the same name and on the filmmakers' interviews with the family. The title refers to a term coined in the 1960s to denote someone who surfs purely for pleasure, but the word *soul* has a double meaning as a reference to Hamilton's Christian faith, which helped her recover her surfing career after the attack. AnnaSophia Robb stars as Bethany Hamilton, Dennis Quaid and Helen Hunt star as Hamilton's parents, and Lorraine Nicholson stars as Alana Blanchard with supporting roles done by Ross Thomas, Chris Brochu, Carrie Underwood, Kevin Sorbo, Jeremy Sumpter, Sonya Balmores, Branscombe Richmond, and Craig T. Nelson.

Plans for a film created by her manager, Roy "Dutch" Hofstetter, existed since shortly after the shark attack on Hamilton in 2003 and her subsequent recovery. After several false starts to production, McNamara was attached to direct the film, and new writers, Michael Berk, Deborah Schwartz and Douglas Schwartz were brought in. While the film is based on Hamilton's 2004 biographical book, the director, producers and writers interviewed the family to learn about unpublished conflicts to include in the film. Filming took place in Hawaii in early 2010, and Robb wore a green sleeve on her arm so visual effects could be added in post-production to create the appearance of a stump. Additional filming took place in Tahiti in August 2010.

FilmDistrict, which was launched in September 2010, formed a partnership with TriStar Pictures to release *Soul Surfer* in theaters. Sony's Affirm division under the vision of Rich Peluso originally anticipated releasing the film in 300 theaters, but the company was impressed enough with the final product to pursue a release in 2,000 theaters. The film was released in theaters in the United States and Canada on April 8, 2011, and became the highest grossing live action surf film and top selling Sony-Affirm motion

Soul Surfer



Theatrical release poster

Directed by	Sean McNamara
Produced by	Sean McNamara David Brookwell Douglas Schwartz Dutch Hofstetter
Screenplay by	Sean McNamara Deborah Schwartz Douglas Schwartz Michael Berk
Based on	<i>Soul Surfer</i> by Bethany Hamilton Sheryl Berk Rick Bundschuh
Starring	AnnaSophia Robb Helen Hunt Dennis Quaid Lorraine Nicholson

picture in history with over \$43,000,000 in domestic box office. The film shows Bethany's story, including before the attack, during the attack, and the aftermath.

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Plot

In 2003, teenager Bethany Hamilton (AnnaSophia Robb) lives in Kauai, Hawaii with her parents Tom (Dennis Quaid) and Cheri (Helen Hunt), and two brothers, Noah (Ross Thomas) and Timmy (Chris Brochu). All are surfers, but she and her best friend Alana Blanchard (Lorraine Nicholson) have grown up with a passion for the sport and enter a competition. Her church youth ministry leader, Sarah Hill (Carrie Underwood), is disappointed when she has to withdraw from a planned missions trip because of the contest.

Bethany and Alana place first and third, respectively, while the second place winner, Malina Birch (Sonya Balmores), proves to be resentful. Bethany invites both girls up on the winner's box with her, but Malina ungraciously refuses. The Rip Curl surfwear company offers to sponsor her and Alana in competition.

The night before Halloween, Alana and Bethany sneak off with some friends to go surfing. Later while Tom goes to the hospital for knee surgery, both girls go surfing with Alana's father Holt (Kevin Sorbo) and brother Byron (Jeremy Sumpter). As Bethany dangles her left arm in the water, a tiger shark appears out of nowhere and sinks its teeth into it, biting it off near the shoulder. Holt gets Bethany out of the water and puts a tourniquet on her while Byron calls 911. An ambulance meets them on the way to the hospital. Just before starting Tom's knee surgery, Dr. David Rovinsky (Craig T. Nelson) is called to the emergency room to treat Bethany. Besides losing her left arm, Bethany also lost 60% of her blood and David calls her survival a miracle.

Bethany's injury prevents her participating in the Rip Curl photo shoots, but she wishes Alana well. *Inside Edition*, a television program, offers to provide a prosthetic arm that is cosmetically perfect and has bendable joints, in exchange for an interview. Bethany angrily rejects it when she learns it will not help her surf as it is

	Carrie Underwood
	Ross Thomas
	Chris Brochu
	Kevin Sorbo
	Jeremy Sumpter
	Craig T. Nelson
Music by	Marco Beltrami
Cinematography	John R. Leonetti
Editing by	Jeff Canavan
Studio	FilmDistrict
	Mandalay Pictures
	Brookwell McNamara
	Entertainment
Distributed by	TriStar Pictures
Release date(s)	April 8, 2011
Running time	106 minutes
Country	United States
Language	English
Budget	\$18 million
Box office	\$44,268,170 ^[1]

not weight bearing, due to the size of the stump of her arm. The onslaught of paparazzi also proves to be a great strain on her family and their privacy. The Hamiltons are grateful to Holt for his quick thinking and decisive action that saved her life.

Bethany perseveres and, after a recuperation period, gets back in the water and learns to surf with one arm, eventually re-entering the competition. She tells her rival Malina not to take it easy on her, and rejects a five-minute head start offered by the judges. She does not perform well because she cannot stay on the board long enough to go out and catch a competitive wave and Malina wins. Disheartened, she decides to give up competitive surfing.

Bethany sees the effects of the 2004 tsunami on television, which places her own problems in perspective. She decides to surprise Sarah by joining the youth group on another mission trip to help the devastated people of Phuket, Thailand. They are understandably afraid of the water, including a little boy. Bethany decides to go into it with a surfboard, hoping this will coax him into it. It works, and the realization that she can use her gift to inspire people motivates her to take up surfing again.

Tom rigs a handle on her surfboard which she can use to prevent falling off while paddling out to the waves, which is not prohibited by the competition's rules. He also voices the belief that she possesses a great surfer's instinct for sensing when the best waves will form. She enters the national championship, thanks Malina for treating her as a serious competitor, and performs respectably, though she is still chasing third place. Suddenly, with only minutes left on the clock, the waves die down and all the surfers can only loiter, waiting for the waves to start back up. Tom's belief in his daughter's instinct is proven when she is the only one to sense a big wave forming, and she alone paddles out. When it forms, the others cannot get out in time and she catches it just as the horn sounds. If it is in time, she will win, but the judges rule that the time has expired. Malina is the winner, but she has finally gotten over her differences with her, inviting her up on the platform to share first place.

Subsequently, Bethany lets the reporters interview her. One asks her what she would do if given the chance to undo the loss of her arm. She says that she would still lose it because she can embrace more people now than she ever could with both. The film ends with real video of Bethany surfing after the attack. Also showing video of interviews and special appearances that she has made.

Cast

- AnnaSophia Robb as Bethany Hamilton
- Helen Hunt as Cheri Hamilton
- Dennis Quaid as Tom Hamilton
- Carrie Underwood as Sarah Hill
- Kevin Sorbo as Holt Blanchard
- Ross Thomas as Noah Hamilton
- Chris Brochu as Timmy Hamilton
- Lorraine Nicholson as Alana Blanchard
- Jeremy Sumpter as Byron Blanchard
- Sonia Balmores Chung as Malina Birch
- Craig T. Nelson as Dr. Rovinsky
- Cody Gomes as Keoki

- Branscombe Richmond as Ben
- Arlene Newman-Van Asperen as Cydney Blanchard
- Nadeen Ayman as Jenny
- Bethany Hamilton as Herself (archive footage)
- Alana Blanchard as Herself (archive footage)
- Tiffany Hofstetter as Rosemary
- Dutch Hofstetter jr. as Brandon

Director Sean McNamara cameos as a Rip Curl executive.

Production

Soul Surfer is directed by Sean McNamara, and written by McNamara, the Schwartz's and Michael Berk, and is based on the 2004 biography *Soul Surfer: A True Story of Faith, Family, and Fighting to Get Back on the Board*. The book and the film are based on the real-life experience of Bethany Hamilton, who lost her left arm as a result of a shark attack while she was surfing. She was 13 years old when she was attacked on October 31, 2003. Though she lost her arm, she was motivated to resume surfing and was able to compete in a major surfing competition on January 10, 2004, finishing fifth. Her story of recovering from the attack became widespread, and her family faced multiple media opportunities.^[2]

Shortly after the incident and the media attention, the father of Bethany's friends Chantilly and Tiffany, Roy "Dutch" Hofstetter, became the Hamilton family's media manager. Hofstetter, in February 2004, envisioned a film based on Bethany's experience, provisionally titled *The Bethany Hamilton Story*.^[2] Bethany published her biographical book *Soul Surfer* in 2004,^[3] and BBC reported that a film about her life was scheduled to begin filming in January 2005.^[4] Production did not begin as anticipated, and *Time* reported in July 2006 that production was scheduled for later in the year.^[5] *Variety* reported that the project at one point had an investment of \$7.5 million and the backing of Peter Schlessel, a Sony Pictures executive.^[6]

Though production had not begun by the end of 2006, in January 2007 Sean McNamara was announced to be directing the biographical film.^[7] While Hamilton had a series of surfing successes, turning pro in 2007, McNamara and producer David Brookwell with her manager Roy "Dutch" Hofstetter sought more material for the film. The book was considered "a straightforward account" that was targeted to Christian readers, so the filmmakers met with the Hamilton family to determine if there were any unpublished conflicts that could be highlighted in the film. They discovered that the incident had strained the family, that family members questioned their Christian faith, and that Bethany Hamilton struggled with her physical appearance and how boys would perceive her. The media attention on the family was described by Brookwell as "a second shark attack" that had made their lives uncomfortably public.^[6]

McNamara, Brookwell, Hofstetter and Douglas Schwartz spent several years raising money for production.^[6] The director wrote an adapted screenplay with Michael Berk, Douglas Schwartz and Deborah Schwartz. Additional uncredited writing was performed by Ron Bass, Jen Smolka and Kara Holden. Before the film entered production, Sony Pictures Worldwide Acquisitions acquired distribution rights for North America and most other territories. The production companies Mandalay Vision, Brookwell McNamara Entertainment and Life's a Beach Entertainment collaborated for the production, with Enticing Entertainment and Island Film

Group providing financing.^[8] In February 2010, McNamara cast numerous actors into roles for *Soul Surfer*. AnnaSophia Robb was cast as Bethany Hamilton, and Dennis Quaid and Helen Hunt were cast as Bethany's parents. Singer Carrie Underwood, in her feature film debut, was cast as a church youth leader. Filming began the same month in Hawaii.^[9] Principal photography and second-unit aerial work took place for 40 days; cinematographer John R. Leonetti shot on 35mm film. During filming, Robb wore a green sleeve on her arm so visual effects could be included later.^[6] Though McNamara was editing the film by May 2010,^[10] additional filming took place in August 2010 in Tahiti. During post-production, the VFX company Engine Room worked on 450 arm-removal shots, digitally inserting the upper arm residuum in place of Robb's green sleeve.^[6] Ultimately, the film's production budget was \$18 million.^[11]

Theatrical release

In July 2010, *USA Today* reported *Soul Surfer* as one of several faith-based films similar to *The Blind Side* being produced in Hollywood; other films included *Get Low*, *Like Dandelion Dust*, and *Jumping the Broom*.^[12] In September 2010, the company FilmDistrict was launched, and the company formed a partnership with TriStar Pictures to release *Soul Surfer*.^[8] FilmDistrict originally committed to release the film at 300 theaters, but when executives saw the final product, they invested \$26 million in a print and advertising commitment with the goal of releasing *Soul Surfer* in 2,000 theaters.^[6]

Prior to the film's commercial release, it was screened for religious leaders. A scene in which Dennis Quaid's character reads the Bible in the hospital at his daughter's bedside had the words "Holy Bible" digitally removed from the cover. Bethany Hamilton's father said that David Zelon, an executive at Mandalay Pictures, lobbied to reduce the *Soul Surfer*'s Christian elements so the film could appeal more to non-Christian audiences. The Hamilton family objected, and the words "Holy Bible" were restored in the scene in a follow-up screening. Another debated scene was one in which Carrie Underwood's character, a church youth leader, quotes biblical scripture (Jeremiah 29:11^[13]). While those involved with the film were fine with the verse, they did not want the scene to explicitly indicate that its origin was the Bible. Their stance was challenged, and the scene indicates the verse being from the Bible. *The Hollywood Reporter* cited the dust-up as an example of Hollywood learning to appeal to the faith-based community while still attracting secular audiences. *The Blind Side*, which accomplished both, had grossed \$256 million in the United States and Canada.^[14]

The film was released in 2,214 theaters in the United States and Canada on April 8, 2011. It grossed \$10.6 million over its opening weekend, ranking fourth at the box office.^[1] Sony Pictures reported that 80% of the audience was female and that 56% were under 25 years old.

Critical reception

Soul Surfer has received mixed reviews from critics. Review aggregator Rotten Tomatoes reports that 45% out of 99 professional critics gave the film a positive review, with an average rating of 5.3/10. The site consensus is: "There's an amazing true story at the heart of *Soul Surfer* -- and unfortunately, it's drowned by waves of Hollywood cheese."^[15] Roger Ebert of the *Chicago Sun-Times* was mildly positive in his review, giving the film two-and-a-half stars out of four and writing "*Soul Surfer* is a wholesome movie, intended as inspirational.

Whether it will cheer viewers who are not as capable as Bethany is an excellent question. AnnaSophia Robb is a convincing, cheerful heroine. Dennis Quaid and Helen Hunt, as Bethany's parents, are stalwart and supportive, although the script indeed leaves them with no other choice.^[16] Owen Gleiberman of *Entertainment Weekly* gave the film a B grade, writing "[t]he more cynical viewers out there may say, 'Not for me.' But *Soul Surfer*, while formulaic in design, is an authentic and heartfelt movie."^[17] S. Jhoanna Robledo of Common Sense Media gave the film three stars out of five, writing "Yes, it's a message movie, but the message burrows deep enough under your skin to make the movie, given its utter conventionality, unexpectedly stirring."^[18]

In sharp contrast, Glenn Heath, Jr. of *Slant Magazine* gave the film a rare zero stars, writing "The brazenly cheap look to the special effects sends the film into MST3K territory, and it's certainly the most hilariously awful surprise attack by a shark since Samuel L. Jackson got devoured by one in *Deep Blue Sea*."^[19] Frank Swietek of the website *One Guy's Opinion* gave the film a C grade, feeling the film was "an earnest family movie that practically drowns in uplift and good intentions."^[20]

Despite mixed critical reception, it was a hit among audiences; it has a 78% audience rating at Rotten Tomatoes,^[21] and the CinemaScore polls reports that the average grade moviegoers gave it was a rare A+.^[22]

Accolades

"Soul Surfer" won the "Best Film for Family Audiences" at the Movie Guide Awards, beating out such films as "Hugo", "The Adventures of Tintin". "The Muppets" and "Puss and Boots".

Casting Society of America^[23]

- Artios Award for Outstanding Achievement in Casting - Feature - Studio or Independent Comedy, *Joey Paul Jensen* (nominated)

ESPY Award^[24]

- Best Sports Movie (nominated)

2011 Teen Choice Awards

- Choice Movie Drama (nominated)
- Choice Movie Drama Actress - AnnaSophia Robb (nominated)

38th People's Choice Awards

- Favorite Book Adaptation - (nominated)

Satellite Awards

- Best Original Score - Pending

Women Film Critics Circle^[25]

- Best Female Images in a Movie (nominated)

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Soul Surfer (2011)

Top 5000

PG 106 min · Biography | Drama | Family - 8 April 2011 (USA)

Soul Surfer (2011) - IMDb

Your rating:

-/10

6.9

Ratings: 6.9/10 from 15,247 users · Metascore: 53/100

Reviews: 91 user | 96 critic | 27 from Metacritic.com

A teenage surfer girl summons the courage to go back into the ocean after losing an arm in a shark attack.

Director: Sean McNamara

Writers: Sean McNamara (screenplay), Deborah Schwartz (screenplay), and 12 more credits »

Stars: AnnaSophia Robb, Dennis Quaid and Helen Hunt | See full cast and crew



+ Watchlist



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Cast

Cast overview, first billed only:

Edit

	...	Bethany Hamilton
	...	Cheri Hamilton
	...	Tom Hamilton
	...	Alana Blanchard
	...	Holt Blanchard
	...	Sarah Hill
	...	Noah Hamilton
	...	Timmy Hamilton
	...	Malina Birch (as Sonya Balmores Chung)
	...	Byron
	...	Dr. David Rovinsky
	...	Ben Alpa
	...	Keoki
	...	Titus
	...	Fuel T.V. reporter #2

[Full cast and crew »](#)

Edit

Storyline

13 year-old Bethany Hamilton is a champion surfer who was born to be in the water. But after a fun night out night surfing and what should be a fun day in the water, she is attacked by a shark and loses her arm. Rushed to the hospital, she remains calm, and maintains her faith in God. Now she has to re-learn how to do everything with only one arm - including how to surf. It will take her friends, family, and her Christian faith to get her back into the water, but if that is where she is meant to be, she will find a way to get there. *Written by [napierslogs](#)*

[Plot Summary](#) | [Plot Synopsis](#)