



# The Main Feature

## Season 37 - Issue 8 screening 12.1.17

2015  
Cert 15

USA, Canada  
2 hour 8 minutes

Director Tom McCarthy  
Writers Josh Singer and Tom McCarthy  
Music Howard Shore  
Cinematography Masanobu Takayanagi  
Editor Tom McArdle

### Cast

**Michael Rezendes, 'Mike'** Mark Ruffalo  
**Walter Robinson, 'Robby'** Michael Keaton  
**Sacha Pfeiffer** Rachel McAdams  
**Martin Baron, 'Marty'** Liev Schreiber  
**Ben Bradlee Jr** John Slattery  
**Matt Carroll** Brian d'Arcy James  
**Mitchell Garabedian** Stanley Tucci  
**Eric Macleish** Billy Crudup  
**Pete Conley** Paul Guilfoyle  
**Jim Sullivan** Jamey Sheridan  
**Cardinal Bernard Law** Len Cariou



When I first offered to write the notes for Spotlight, I wondered as to the best way to give this year's Oscar winner for Best Film some context.

From a period where journalists hacking mobile phones and the conviction of the "Fake Sheikh" have led to serious questioning of the practices of the industry, I believe it is also important to remember some of the great coups of investigative journalism, including Watergate, the Profumo affair, Thalidomide, MPs' expenses, or even the Boston Globe's earlier work building on the New York World's exposé of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s.



Long before the Freedom of Information Act, the Fourth Estate worked hard to get at the truth. Investigative journalists won plaudits and prizes for their work, as well as the gratitude of the public, finally allowed to know what others wanted to keep hidden.

Then again, perhaps we should remind ourselves of investigative journalism's leading exponents, from BBC TV's Panorama team, BBC Radio 4's File on Four and Channel 4's Dispatches to John Pilger, who wrote for the Daily Mirror in its heyday and is still at work. Digging up buried stories requires courage (just ask Roger Cook) and tenacity.

Failing that, we could compare the film's subject matter to the scandals surrounding the Magdalene Laundries run by the Catholic Church in Ireland, which will be familiar to

anyone who saw *Philomena* (neatly joining up two aspects of the film, she was aided by journalist Martin Sixsmith in her quest to find out what had happened to her son).

And then, at the end of November 2016 a scandal to rival that of Jimmy Savile broke: sexual abuse of young footballers, for which one former coach is already in jail and now, it appears, others may be implicated.

The comparison with the subject matter of tonight's film is closer than you might think.

Thousands of youngsters play football, long for a career in the beautiful game, sacrifice other interests and hobbies, and are at the mercy of adults who have the power to fulfil or destroy their dreams. The former players who have spoken out are mostly in their 40s now, so were children in the era before the concept of "safeguarding" entered our vocabulary. Even so, it seems almost inconceivable that children and teenagers could be abused for years without their parents realising what was going on; but such is the hold that the abuser has over his victim that the shame is almost always transferred from the adult to the child.

The parallel with the Boston situation is clear: the children became convinced that they would suffer more by speaking out than by staying silent. The truth was held back by a wall of secrecy, like the water behind a dam. Eventually, when one or two were brave enough to speak out, the dam was breached.

*All the President's Men* (1976) proved that a film about journalists trying to dig out truth that others wanted to stay buried could win audiences and awards (in its case 4 Oscars, 2 Golden Globes, 5 BAFTAs). As much as the notorious Nixon tapes (which famously had the transcripts littered with the phrase "expletive deleted" to protect the sensibilities of the public from the President's copious swearing), the book and film shed light on nefarious goings-on in the corridors of power. *Spotlight* does something similar, following the trail with the team as they chase leads, ask awkward questions and uncover unpleasant truths about their own city. At first reluctant to be steered by a new editor – who is doubly an outsider, as he's not a Bostonian and he's the first Jewish editor on the *Globe* – they eventually realise that the story is one they cannot, indeed must not, ignore.



After watching tonight's film, Carl Bernstein, who with Bob Woodward led the *Washington Post* investigation that traced the Watergate burglary all the way to the Nixon White House and was immortalised in *All The President's Men*, rang the producer and gave this quote: "*Spotlight* is a film that demonstrates finally, in the era of Twitter, why we need great reporting: more than ever—and shows how real journalism is done, with all its difficulty and complexity and, especially, the moral ambiguities and choices a truly free press must deal with. Ultimately, as *Spotlight* makes clear, the press remains our last chance at holding institutions accountable through the best obtainable version of the truth."

Gill McGlashan

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# Final ABC cinema closes

The final film has been shown in the last remaining high street cinema with the ABC brand.

The Odeon-owned cinema on Westover Road in Bournemouth has been sold and is due to be redeveloped into flats.

ABC - Associated British Cinemas - began in 1928, with the brand name gradually disappearing following its takeover by Odeon in 2000.

The Westover Road building first opened its doors as a 2,515-seat cinema in June 1937, showing the Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers musical *Shall We Dance*. The cinema divided into three screens in the 1970s but its 634-seat main auditorium remains one of the largest in the UK.

Phil Clapp, chief executive of the UK Cinema Association, said: 'ABC Cinemas were a mainstay of UK cinema-going for many millions of people.'

'Many people are rightly nostalgic as to their experiences at ABC sites across the country and it is true that for many the company kept the cinema-going flame alight at a time when many other sites were closing or being converted.'

'Happily, we are now in a much healthier period for UK cinemas, and while the loss of the last ABC is of course sad, the public can be reassured that the modern cinema-going experience is a more popular and enjoyable one than ever.'

Richard Gray, of the Cinema Theatre Association, said: 'The ABC brand was huge. They had movie theatres all over the UK.'

'In the 1950s and '60s the ABC and Odeon had cinemas in virtually every town.'

'The ABC spent more on their cinemas than the Odeon. They were larger and more elaborately equipped in terms of fixtures and fittings and had more external appeal.'

'By the late 1960s people stopped going because they watched TV at home and the Odeon started sub-dividing their theatres into two or three screens from a 2,000 seat auditorium.'

'In 1985 the first purpose-built multiplex was built in the UK in Milton Keynes, they were very much a US import, and things went downhill from there for the ABC.'

Spencer Clark, the general manager of the cinema said: "It was one of the flagship cinemas for ABC and it's a fond farewell for what is a great venue. There is so much nostalgia associated with the ABC brand and we would like to give the final cinema the send-off it deserves."

The last screening was *Back to the Future* which was shown in aid of charity Dorset Mind.

## Comments and reactions to: **Hector**

Very depressing. Wonderful short term help, but then....? P.S. Subtitles please - regional UK, USA accents etc v difficult

**Subtitles might have been helpful!**

Hopeless, pointless – nothing changes

**A bit grim – though thought provoking**

One to put life in perspective – excellent acting

**Good choice – avoids Christmas sentimentality for once**

Depressing subject but rather shows the kindness of strangers

**Makes us realise how lucky we are. Heartfelt and enlightening**

A worthy film, perhaps too long and cannot be classified as entertainment

**A nice film at Christmas**

Well acted, thoughtful film

**Topical and touching**

Score	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	~	~	~	~	2	8	7	6	7	2	~

No of reaction slips received = 32

Average Score = 6.44

Position	Film	Average Score
1 <sup>st</sup>	Bridge of Spies	8.24
2 <sup>nd</sup>	The Good Lie	7.5
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Carol	6.97
4 <sup>th</sup>	Gunfight at the OK Corral	6.9
5 <sup>th</sup>	The Big Parade	6.82
6 <sup>th</sup>	Hector	6.44
7 <sup>th</sup>	Comme Une Image	5.82



**Next film on  
26 January:**

“It has the heart and feeling of the great British comedies inspired by true events. It will keep you on the edge of your seat and has a lot of heart.”

“From niche subject matter, Fletcher's crafted a movie that's both universal but also unashamedly, gloriously British. Very funny, genuinely moving and endlessly good-natured.”

“Eddie The Eagle is a joyful, inspiring film where your fist raises in triumph, but to be so wildly funny too is icing on the cake.”