

Blu-Ray Review: ‘All the President’s Men,’ ‘Network’ Hold Up After 35 Years

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on February 22, 2011 - 4:44pm

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CHICAGO – As drama circulates around this weekend’s Oscar awards and people question what winners will hold up over the years, it makes sense to look back 35 years to two Best Picture nominees from 1976, a pair of critical darlings (not unlike “The Social Network”) beat out by a popular favorite (“Rocky”) — “All the President’s Men” and “Network.” Both films have recently been released on Blu-ray in great editions for film collectors everywhere.

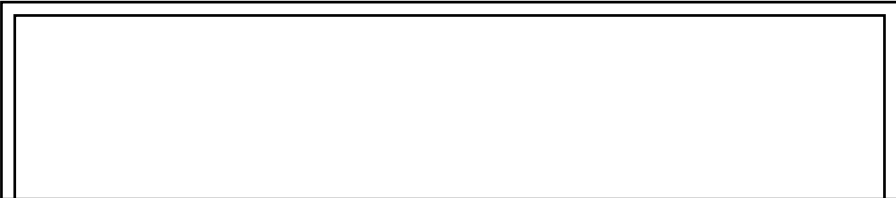


1976 was a hell of a year. It makes it all the more remarkable that the unknown Sylvester Stallone climbed all the way to Best Picture with “Rocky” when one considers that the film beat “All the President’s Men,” “Bound For Glory,” “Network,” and “Taxi Driver.” (And “Carrie” and “Marathon Man” weren’t even nominated.) Two of the best from that entire era, and two films that have held up remarkably well, have just hit Blu-ray for the first time.



All the President’s Men was released on Blu-Ray on February 15th, 2011
Photo credit: Warner Bros. Home Video

Alan J. Pakula’s “All the President’s Men” actually won more Oscars than “Rocky,” taking home Best Supporting Actor (Jason Robards), Art Direction, Sound, and Adapted Screenplay (William Goldman). The film today has an added resonance considering the recent failure of modern journalism to be much more than commercials for other programming or products. The time seems passed when newspapers actually served as checks and balances for people and worked to expose corruption and evil. One wonders if Woodward and Bernstein wouldn’t work for a website in 2011.





Network was released on Blu-Ray on February 15th, 2011

Photo credit: Universal Home Video

Whatever you think of Richard Nixon or what's happened to journalism in the 35 years, "All the President's Men" is still strikingly entertaining. And the Blu-ray transfer is a nice one. Warner Bros. seems to have found the right balance for their catalog releases after over-polishing some of the early ones to the point that they looked a bit plastic. The balance of grain in the video is just about right.

Same goes for the WB transfer of "Network," another 35-year-old film that won one more Oscar than "Rocky" — Best Actor (Peter Finch), Best Actress (Faye Dunaway), Best Supporting Actress (Beatrice Straight), and Original Screenplay (Paddy Chayefsky). "Network" plays even better a quarter-century later given the tabloid culture that the film prophesized. It's a great movie, my choice for the best of 1976 by far. Pick 'em both up.

"All the President's Men"

Synopsis:

"In the Watergate Building, lights go on and four burglars are caught in the act. That night triggered revelations that will drive a U.S. President from office. Washington Post reporters Bob Woodward (Robert Redford) and Carl Bernstein (Dustin Hoffman) grabbed the story and stayed with it through doubts, denials and discouragement. Directed by Alan J. Pakula and based on the Woodward/Bernstein book, the film explores a working newspaper, where the mission is to get the story – and get it right."

Special Features:

- o Telling the Truth About Lies: The Making of All the President's Men
- o Woodward and Bernstein: Lighting the Fire
- o Out of the Shadows: The Man Who Was Deep Throat
- o Commentary by Robert Redford
- o Vintage Featurette Pressure and the Press: The Making of All the President's Men
- o Vintage Jason Robards Interview Excerpt from Dinah!
- o Alan J. Pakula Thrillers Trailer Gallery

"Network"

Synopsis:

"Newscaster Howard Beale has a message for those who package reports of cute puppies, movie premieres and fender benders as hard news: 'I'm as mad as hell, and I'm not going to take this anymore.'" Sidney Lumet directs Paddy Chayefsky's satire about the things people do for love...and ratings. Faye Dunaway plays a TV exec guarding ratings like a tigress protecting her cubs; Peter Finch's airwave rants become a phenomenon and William Holden, Robert Duvall and Beatrice Straight add to the fierce vitality."

Special Features:

- o The Making of Network 6-Part Documentary: Tune in to How a Movie Landmark Caught Media Lightning, with Sidebars on Paddy Chayefsky, Getting Mad As Hell and Walter Cronkite's Reflections
- o Vintage Paddy Chayefsky Interview Excerpt from Dinah!, Hosted by Dinah Shore
- o Commentary by Director Sidney Lumet
- o Private Screenings with Sidney Lumet: Turner Classic Movies Host Robert Osborne Interviews the Director

"All the President's Men" stars Robert Redford, Dustin Hoffman, Jack Warden, Martin Balsam, Hal Holbrook, and Jason Robards. It was written by William Goldman and directed by Alan J. Pakula. It was released on Blu-ray on February 15th, 2011.

"Network" stars Faye Dunaway, William Holden, Peter Finch, and Robert Duvall. It was written by Paddy Chayefsky and directed by Sidney Lumet. It was released on Blu-ray on February 15th, 2011.

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