

Blu-Ray Review: Ben Affleck Stars in Timely ‘The Company Men’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on June 20, 2011 - 1:02pm

- [Ben Affleck](#) [2]
- [Blu-ray Review](#) [3]
- [Brian Tallerico](#) [4]
- [Chris Cooper](#) [5]
- [Craig T. Nelson](#) [6]
- [ER](#) [7]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [8]
- [John Wells](#) [9]
- [Kevin Costner](#) [10]
- [Maria Bello](#) [11]
- [Rosemarie Dewitt](#) [12]
- [Shameless](#) [13]
- [Southland](#) [14]
- [The Company Men](#) [15]
- [The West Wing](#) [16]
- [Tommy Lee Jones](#) [17]
- [Theater, TV, DVD & Blu-Ray](#) [18]

CHICAGO – John Wells has been one of the most important voices in television for the last two decades, shepherding “Third Watch,” “The West Wing,” “ER,” “Southland,” “Shameless,” and many more. It’s always hit-and-miss when a talent from one medium jumps to another and such is the case with “The Company Men,” starring Ben Affleck, Chris Cooper, Tommy Lee Jones, Maria Bello, and Kevin Costner. The great cast keeps it together and Wells has a keen ear for dialogue but the film never develops beyond a timely character study.



Blu-ray Rating: **3.0/5.0**

Synopsis: “From multi-E Emmy winning writer/director John Wells (ER, The West Wing), The Company Men is a remarkably relevant and uplifting motion picture experience inspired by today’s headlines. Featuring a powerhouse cast including Academy Award winners Ben Affleck, Chris Cooper, Tommy Lee Jones and Kevin Costner, the film has been hailed as “grade A. juicy, timely and terrifically engrossing” (Entertainment Weekly).

Bobby Walker (Affleck) is living the American Dream, until he is stunned to find himself the latest casualty of corporate downsizing. Suddenly, Bobby is forced to re-evaluate his self-worth as a husband, a father and a man. For as long as he can remember, he’s given his life to his job. Now, with only the love of his wife and family, it’s time to take his life back...”



The Company Men was released on DVD and Blu-ray on June 7th, 2011.

Photo credit: Anchor Bay

Very few films have been as timely as Wells’ directorial cinematic debut but just being on top of the headlines does not make it an interesting drama. My main issue with “The Company Men” is a simple one — I never cared about Bobby Walker or most of the other characters in his

universe.



The Company Men was released on DVD and Blu-ray on June 7th, 2011.
Photo credit: Anchor Bay

Affleck isn't bad (he's really developed into a strong actor as he's aged) but it feels almost as if Wells underestimated the running time of a feature film. What I mean is that "The Company Men" would make a great pilot. I would love to see the Walkers struggle with life without their accustomed riches but don't care as much that Bobby can't get into the golf club in a feature film. And much of the supporting cast feels similarly underdeveloped, especially Maria Bello, a great actress completely wasted here, and Rosemarie DeWitt, a wife who feels like a plot device.

The men make out a little better. Chris Cooper and Tommy Lee Jones give emotionally effective performances, especially the former, who has the most arc of the film and is actually a character I wanted to spend more time with. Cooper plays one of those men most damagingly hit by the economic crisis — the over-qualified and aging. There are thousands of men out there not being hired because they simply have TOO much experience. That's actually a more interesting story than Bobby's as he clearly will find work again but the scenario isn't as certain for people like Cooper a few decades older.

"The Company Men" is far from a bad film. Wells has a keen ear for dialogue and the ensemble is stellar. There's just an urgency and an identifiable story that's missing here, something that works for TV but not for film. Judged as a debut (which it technically is), then it holds a TON of promise for whatever Wells does next. It just doesn't compare to what he's done before.

Special Features:

- o Alternate Ending
- o Audio Commentary with Writer and Director John Wells
- o Making The Company Men
- o Deleted Scenes

"The Company Men" stars Ben Affleck, Chris Cooper, Kevin Costner, Tommy Lee Jones, Maria Bello, Rosemarie DeWitt, and Craig T. Nelson. It was written and directed by John Wells and released on Blu-ray and DVD on June 7th, 2011.



[19]

By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [20]
Content Director
HollywoodChicago.com
brian@hollywoodchicago.com [19]

Source URL (retrieved on Apr 20 2024 - 11:32am):

<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/14688/blu-ray-review-ben-affleck-stars-in-timely-the-company-men>

Links:

[1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/briantt>

[2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/ben-affleck>
[3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/blu-ray-review>
[4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/brian-tallerico>
[5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/chris-cooper>
[6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/craig-t-nelson>
[7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/er>
[8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
[9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/john-wells>
[10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/kevin-costner>
[11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/maria-bello>
[12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/rosemarie-dewitt>
[13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/shameless>
[14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/southland>
[15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/the-company-men>
[16] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/the-west-wing>
[17] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/tommy-lee-jones>
[18] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/dvd-theater-tv-news>
[19] <mailto:brian@hollywoodchicago.com>
[20] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#BRIAN>