

## Johnny Depp's 'Public Enemies' Delivers Bona Fide Chicago Powerhouse

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CHICAGO – Was John Dillinger an Adolf Hitler-level criminal mastermind or a modern-day Robin Hood superman? In the authentic reality portrayed by the god-like Johnny Depp in the Chicago-filmed “Public Enemies,” he’s a little bit of both for blockbuster filmmaker Michael Mann.

Unfortunately, Depp’s nemesis – special agent Melvin Purvis as played by “The Dark Knight” mainstay Christian Bale – falls flat. Bale rolls through the motions with a monotone and monotonous role that needed the tension of a World War conflict rather than a rubber band.



The French actress Marion Cotillard, on the other hand, delivers yet another intoxicating performance as Billie Frechette this time in a supporting role. We’re reminded why she ever-so-definitely deserved her 2008 Oscar for so absolutely embodying Edith Piaf in 2007’s “La Vie en Rose”.

Leelee Sobieski is thrown in toward the end as the downplayed character Polly Hamilton in a relatively wasted and unnecessary cameo. In addition, Matt Craven – who you’ve almost certainly never heard of, has no relation to Wes Craven and looks strikingly like Sean Penn – is merely being mentioned in this review for the three aforementioned points of comedy.



[Read Adam Fendelman's full review of "Public Enemies" in our reviews section.](#) [17]

Giovanni Ribisi from “My Name is Earl,” “Friends” and the underrated film “Heaven” (that too many people haven’t seen but should rent tomorrow) methodically portrays Alvin “Creepy” Karpis. While John Dillinger was public enemy No. 1 for the FBI, Karpis was the final public enemy to be nailed.

Karpis’ capture catapulted FBI director J. Edgar Hoover – portrayed with spot-on calculation by Billy Crudup of “Watchmen” and “Almost Famous” fame – and the FBI to national eminence. In the “Public Enemies” period piece, J. Edgar Hoover and his FBI both have a tall task: proving to the American government and people that they should exist and are competent crime stoppers.

*“Public Enemies” from director Michael Mann stars Johnny Depp, Christain Bale, Marion Cotillard, Leelee Sobieski, Giovanni Ribisi, Billy Crudup, Channing Tatum, James Russo, Stephen Dorff, Stephen Graham, Bill Camp, Chandler Williams, Branka Katic, Jason Clarke, Christian Stolte and David Wenham. The film, which was released nationwide on July 1, 2009, is rated “R” for gangster violence and some language with a 140-minute running time.*



[Continuing reading for Adam Fendelman's full "Public Enemies" review.](#) [17]



Christian Bale stars as special agent Melvin Purvis – the nemesis of the legendary Depression-era outlaw John Dillinger – in “Public Enemies” from filmmaker Michael Mann.  
*Photo credit: Universal Pictures*



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