October 10, 2017 (XXXV:7)
Alan J. Pakula. *All the President’s Men* (1976), 138 min.

*(The online version of this handout has color images.)*

Academy Awards, 1977

**Won**

- Best Actor in a Supporting Role, Jason Robards
- Best Writing, Screenplay Based on Material from Another Medium, William Goldman
- Best Art Direction-Set Decoration, George Jenkins & George Gaines
- Best Sound, Arthur Piantadosi, Les Fresholtz, Rick Alexander and James E. Webb

**Nominated**

- Best Picture
- Best Actress in a Supporting Role, Jane Alexander
- Best Director, Alan J. Pakula
- Best Film Editing, Robert L. Wolfe

**Directed by** Alan J. Pakula  
**Written by** Carl Bernstein & Bob Woodward (book), William Goldman (screenplay)  
**Produced by** Jon Boorstin, Michael Britton, Walter Coblenz  
**Music** David Shire  
**Cinematography** Gordon Willis  
**Film Editing** Robert L. Wolfe

**Cast**

Dustin Hoffman…Carl Bernstein  
Robert Redford…Bob Woodward  
Jack Warden…Harry Rosenfeld  
Martin Balsam…Howard Simons  
Hal Holbrook…Deep Throat  
Jason Robards…Ben Bradlee  
Jane Alexander…Bookkeeper  
Meredith Baxter…Debbie Sloan  
Ned Beatty…Dardis  
Stephen Collins…Hugh Sloan  
Penny Fuller…Sally Aiken  
John McMartin…Foreign Editor  
Robert Walden…Donald Segretti  
Frank Wills…Frank Wills  
F. Murray Abraham…Arresting Officer #1

David Arkin…Eugene Bachinski  
Henry Calvert…Bernard L. Barker  
Dominic Chianese…Eugenio R. Martinez  
Bryan Clark…Arguing Attorney  
Nicolas Coster…Markham  
Lindsay Crouse…Kay Eddy  
Valerie Curtin…Miss Milland  
Gene Dynarski…Court Clerk  
Nate Esformes…Virgilio R. Gonzales  
Ron Hale…Frank Sturgis  
Richard Herd…James W. McCord, Jr.  
Polly Holliday…Dardis’ Secretary  
James Karen…Hugh Sloan’s Lawyer  
Paul Lambert…National Editor  
Frank Latimore…Judge  
Gene Lindsey…Alfred D. Baldwin  
Anthony Mannino…Arresting Officer #2  
Allyn Ann McLerie…Carolyn Abbott  
James Murtaugh…Congress Library Clerk  
John O’Leary…Attorney #1  
Jess Osuna…Joe, FBI Agent  
Neva Patterson…CRP Woman  
George Pentecost…George  
Penny Peyser…Sharon Lyons
Joshua Shelley...Al Lewis
Sloane Shelton...Bookeeper's Sister
Lelan Smith...Arresting Officer #3
Jaye Stewart...Male Librarian
Ralph Williams...Ray Steuben
George Wyner...Attorney #2
Leroy Aarons...Financial Editor
Donnlynn Bennett...Reporter

Alan J. Pakula (b. April 7, 1928 in The Bronx, New York City, New York—d. November 19, 1998, age 70, in Melville, New York) was born to a Polish Jewish immigrant father who ran a printing business, while his mother was born in New York, to Russian Jewish parents. Pakula graduated from Yale and was expected to take over the business, but he convinced his father into underwriting a movie. At Yale, Pakula had studied drama, but had a keen interest in psychology. Some of this is reflected in his films, particularly how men deal with their fears, has been reflected in many of his films. Started out as assistant to the head of Warner Brothers Cartoons, before becoming assistant producer at MGM in 1950. In 1962 he produced To Kill a Mockingbird, and a year later he produced Love with the Proper Stranger. His first directorial effort was the Liza Minnelli helmed The Sterile Cuckoo (1969), which won the actress an Oscar nomination. He also directed Klute (1971) netting lead actress Jane Fonda an Oscar win. He also directed Meryl Streep’s Oscar winning performance in 1982’s Sophie’s Choice. Pakula, himself, was twice nominated by the Academy: once for Best Adapted Screenplay for Sophie Choice and once for Best Director for tonight’s film. He has never won. As a director, Pakula was known for two things, his interest in psychology and his interest in his actors. Often labeled an ‘actor’s director’, Pakula liked to give his actors a wide breadth in discovering the psychology and motivations for their characters. Harrison Ford, who starred in the director’s final film, The Devil’s Own (1997) called the director “a natural guide to the inner realm”; Julia Roberts once described Pakula as “a psychologist and director”. The director himself, in an interview with the New York Times is quoted as saying he is interested in how men deal with internal fear. Pakula died in a freak accident when a metal pipe smashed through the windshield of his black Volvo station wagon and struck him in the head. The seven-foot-long pipe was already in the roadway when another car gave it a glancing blow, sending it through Pakula’s windshield. Pakula’s car swerved across a service road and hit a fence. The accident happened about a quarter mile east of the Melville exit on the Long Island Expressway. He was taken to North Shore University Hospital where he was pronounced dead. At the time of the accident, Pakula was working on two projects: a screenplay called “No Ordinary Time” about the White House during the Roosevelt years and a greenlit film called A Tale of Two Strippers starring Josh Duhamel and Ashton Kutcher.

Carl Bernstein (b. February 14, 1944 in Washington, D.C.) began part-time work at the Washington Star at the age of 16 and later dropped out of the University of Maryland to work full-time as a reporter. Unfortunately, in a catch-22, Bernstein couldn’t become a journalist as planned without a bachelor’s degree, and he had no desire to re-enroll in college. Bernstein stayed in touch with the city editor at the Star, and a few years later he followed him to the Daily Journal in Elizabethtown, New Jersey. There, he made his mark right away, winning an award from the New Jersey Press Association for stories he’d written on the blackout of 1965 and the problems of teenage drinking. Bernstein joined the Washington Post’s metropolitan staff in 1966, specializing in police, court and city hall assignments, with occasional self-assigned feature stories. In the wake of the Watergate scandal, Bernstein and Woodward wrote two books: All the President’s Men (1974) and The Final Days (1976). Bernstein left the Washington Post at the end of 1976 and worked as an investigative reporter for ABC. He wrote about international intrigue while contributing to such magazines as Time, New Republic, the New York Times and Rolling Stone. He also wrote more books, notably His Holiness: John Paul II and the Hidden History of Our Time (1996) and A Woman in Charge (2007), a biography of Hillary Rodham Clinton.

Bob Woodward (b. March 26, 1943 in Geneva, Illinois) is a journalist and acclaimed non-fiction author who has worked for The Washington Post since 1971. Woodward was working as a reporter for paper when he was tipped to a burglary at the Democratic National Committee headquarters at the Watergate complex in Washington, D.C. With fellow journalist Carl Bernstein, Woodward eventually connected the break-in to the highest levels of the Nixon administration. The Washington Post was awarded the 1973 Pulitzer Prize for Public Service for its coverage—one of two Post Pulitzers won through Woodward's contributions—and Woodward and Bernstein became synonymous with investigative journalism. After receiving his undergraduate degree from Yale University in 1965, he enlisted into the U.S. Navy and served a five-year tour of duty. Following his discharge from the Navy, Woodward landed a reporting position at the Montgomery County Sentinel in Maryland. He left the newspaper the following year for a position at The Washington Post. The transition would soon prove to be a wise career move for the young journalist. More than four decades since the Watergate scandal erupted, Woodward has never rested his laurels on his early 1970s fame. In 2001, he met with wide acclaim for his in-depth coverage of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in New York City, which was printed in The Washington Post and led to another big win for the paper: the 2002 Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting. In addition to continuing his career at The Washington Post (now as an

William Goldman (b. August 12, 1931 in Highland Park, Illinois) A two-time Academy Award Winner, he is one of the most successful screenwriters and script doctors in Hollywood (as well as successful novelist). After graduating Oberlin College in 1952 and gaining his M.A. at Columbia University in 1956, he set out to forge a career as a novelist. By the 1960s, his novels were being made into films such as Soldier in the Rain which served as the basis of the 1963 film starring Steve McQueen and Jackie Gleason. Goldman started writing screenplays in 1965 with “Masquerade”. He wrote the screenplays for five films starring Robert Redford: Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid (1969), The Hot Rock (1972), The Great Waldo Pepper (1975), All the President’s Men (1976) and A Bridge Too Far (1977). He was an uncredited screenwriter on the 1993 Arnold Schwarzenegger film Last Action Hero (1993). Wrote a script for Mission: Impossible II (2000). He was also the script doctor for Ben Affleck and Matt Damon’s first film Good Will Hunting (1997). There has been a persistent rumor that Goldman—not the cute boys from Boston—is the real writer of the story. A rumor which Goldman has vehemently denied saying, “All I did was tell them, ‘Get rid of the F.B.I. stuff. Go with the family, go with Boston, go with all that wonderful stuff.’” Goldman believed that Rocky (1976) beat All the President’s Men (1976) for the 1976 Best Picture Academy Award due its spectacular box office run and the fact that Hollywood loved the real-life, Lana Turner-esque story of Sylvester Stallone’s emergence into super-stardom from obscurity. Goldman believes that if the Hollywood community knew about Stallone’s hubris, it would not have voted his film. Although, Goldman has praised the action star for writing one of his favorite scripts of all time with Rocky. The writer gushed, “God, read it, it’s wonderful. It’s just got marvelous stuff. And then he stopped suddenly because it’s easier being a movie star and making all that money than going in your pit and writing a script.” The writer isn’t always so kind to directors: “Directors - even though we all know from the media’s portrayal of them that they are men and women of wisdom and artistic vision, masters of the subtle use of symbolism - are often a bunch of insecure assholes.” Goldman is the Oscar Winner of the 1985 Laurel Award for lifetime achievement in screenwriting. Some of his other writing credits are Wild Card (2015 based on novel Heat/screenplay), Dreamcatcher (2003, screenplay), Hearts in Atlantis (2001, screenplay), The General’s Daughter (1999, screenplay), Absolute Power (1997, screenplay), Maverick (1994), Chaplin (1992, screenplay), Year of the Comet (1992), Memoirs of an Invisible Man (1992, screenplay), Misery (1990, screenplay), The Princess Bride (1987, novel & screenplay), Heat (1986, novel & screenplay), Mr. Horn (1979, TV Movie), Magic (1978, novel & screenplay), A Bridge Too Far (1977, screenplay), Marathon Man (novel & screenplay), The Great Waldo Pepper (1975, screenplay), The Stepford Wives (1975, screenplay), Papillon (1973, contributing writer - uncredited), The Hot Rock (1972, screenplay), Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid (1969, written by), No Way to Treat a Lady (1968, novel), Harper (1966, screenplay) and Masquerade (1965, screenplay).


Gordon Willis (b. May 28, 1931 in Astoria, Queens, New York City, New York—d. May 18, 2014, age 82, in North Falmouth, Massachusetts) will always be associated with one decade, the 1970s, and three directors, Alan Pakula, Francis Ford Coppola and Woody Allen. Willis was the director of photography of all three men’s breakthrough movies: Klute (1971), The Godfather (1972) and Annie Hall (1977) respectively. Though all three movies won Oscars, Willis was not granted even a nomination for them. Born in Queens, New York City, the son a make-up man at Warner Brothers in Brooklyn. At a young age, he became interested in lighting and stage design, later turning to photography. Willis then served in the air force during the Korean war. After leaving the air force, he spent some years working in advertising, where he learned to pare down his style. In 1968, the maverick film-maker Aram Avakian chose Willis to work as director of photography on the counterculture black comedy End of the Road (1970). But it was the shadowy effects of Klute (1971) that prompted Coppola to hire him for The Godfather. He was also a favorite of Allen, who used him on eight pictures, and of Pakula, for whom he made six films. His relationship with Coppola was less cordial. Willis walked off the set more than once on the first Godfather picture, in protest at what he saw as Coppola’s incompetence. He maintained that he
and Coppola had agreed that it should be a tableau movie, with the actors moving in and out of frame, giving it the feel of a ‘40s picture. “Francis wasn’t well-schooled in that kind of movie-making,” Willis said. “You can’t shoot a classic movie like video theatre.” Coppola commented: “The whole visual style was set out before we shot one foot of film. We talked about the contrast between good and evil, light and dark. How we’d really use darkness, how we’d start out with a black sheet of paper and paint in the light.” This was to become a defining feature of Willis’s camerawork, and earned him the nickname “The Prince of Darkness”. For Allen, the cinematographer worked on Interiors (1978) Manhattan (1979), the Felliniesque Stardust Memories (1980), Midsummer Night’s Sex Comedy (1982) the mockumentary Zelig (1983) and The Purple Rose of Cairo (1985). Willis's last film was The Devil's Own (1997), which was also Pakula's final film before his death in 1998 in a car accident.

Dustin Hoffman (b. August 8, 1937, Los Angeles, California) graduated from Los Angeles High School in 1955, and went to Santa Monica City College, where he dropped out after a year due to bad grades. But before he did, he took an acting course because he was told that “nobody flunks acting.” Hoffman ultimately decided to go into acting as a way of avoiding the service. He trained at The Pasadena Playhouse for two years where he met Gene Hackman. Hackman failed out after three months and moved to New York to try his luck as a stage actor. When Hoffman moved to New York, he looked up Hackman for a place to stay. Originally Hackman had offered to let him stay a few nights, but Hoffman would not leave. Finally, the two roomed together with another fellow actor, Robert Duvall. Hoffman and Hackman also spent many nights playing music on their roof. Hoffman played the bongo drums while Hackman played the conga drums (Matthew McConaughey eat your heart out.) Hoffman was also a neighbor of Mel Brooks and was set to play the role of Franz Liebkind in Brooks’ first film, The Producers (1967). Just before production began, Hoffman was offered the leading role in The Graduate (1967), co-starring Brooks’ wife Anne Bancroft, and he asked to be let out of his contract. The role led to the first of his numerous Oscar nods. Hoffman won best actor for Kramer v. Kramer (1979) and Rain Man (1988), and was nominated for Wag the Dog (1997), Tootsie (1982), Lenny (1974), Midnight Cowboy (1969) and The Graduate (1967). More recently he has played Captain Hook in Finding Neverland (2004), with Hackman in Runaway Jury (2003), and the Kung Fu Panda franchise. This year he stars as the cantankerous Jewish patriarch in the highly anticipated film The Meyerowitz Stories (New and Selected). Some of his other films are American Buffalo (1996), Billy Bathgate (1991), Dick Tracy (1990), Straight Time (1978), Marathon Man (1976), Papillon (1973), Straw Dogs (1971), and Little Big Man (1970).

Robert Redford (b. August 18, 1936 in Santa Monica, California) was a scrappy kid who stole hubcaps in school and lost his college baseball scholarship at the University of Colorado because of drunkenness. After leaving college, he spent some time drifting across America, spending a time working in the California oil fields. He then moved to Europe studying art in Paris and Florence, coming back in the States after deciding on a career as a theatrical designer in New York. Enrolling at the American Academy of Dramatic Art he turned to acting making his stage debut in Tall Story. In 1962 he was signed for the stage production of Barefoot in the Park which was a smash hit but it wasn’t until 5 years later when it was filmed that he became an important star. Stage experience coupled with all-American good looks led to movies and television roles. Lost out on the role of Ben Braddock in The Graduate (1967) because director Mike Nichols didn’t think anyone would believe Redford would have trouble getting “the girl”. His breakthrough role was in Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid (1969), when the actor was 32. He was considered for the role of Michael Corleone in The Godfather in 1972, but it was in 1973 with The Way We Were and The Sting, that made Redford the number one box office star for the next three years. Redford used his clout to advance environmental causes and his riches to acquire Utah property, which he transformed into a ranch and the Sundance ski resort. In 1980, he established the Sundance Institute for aspiring filmmakers. Its annual film festival has become one of the world's most influential. Redford's directorial debut, Ordinary People (1980), won him the Academy Award as Best Director in 1981.He waited eight years before getting behind the camera again, this time for the screen version of John Nichols’ acclaimed novel of the Southwest, The Milagro Beanfield War (1988). He scored with critics and fans in 1992 with A River Runs Through It (1992), and again, in 1994, with Quiz Show (1994), which earned him yet another Best Director nomination.

Jack Warden (b. September 18, 1920 in Newark, New Jersey—d. July 19, 2006. age 85, in New York City, New York) made his professional stage debut in 1947, and was still going strong more than half a century later with over 60 movies and as many TV appearances. Though his name might not be familiar to most moviegoers, with his raspy voice, stocky build and pugnacious attitude, he was perfect at playing bullies, loud-mouthed types and simple-minded ordinary Joes. He is probably most well-known for his breakout role in Sidney Lumet’s classic 12 Angry Men (1957) as Juror number 7, the impatient extrovert gum-chewing salesmen, who wants to leave the jury room as soon as possible to attend a baseball game. Warden's tough upbringing undoubtedly helped his portrayals. He was born to a poor Jewish family in Newark, New Jersey, near the dock area. While still at high school, the well-built young Jack did some professional boxing as a ranked welterweight under the name Johnny Costello, as well as working as a bouncer at New York's celebrated Roseland ballroom. After being expelled from school
for pro-boxing, he joined the US navy and, in 1941, the merchant navy. Later he switched to the army's 101st Airborne Division and suffered a serious leg injury in a jump during training for the D-day invasion. While recovering, he began reading plays and decided to try his hand at acting. Warden then played Coach Frank Whip in Mr. Peepers, a live series which ran from 1952 to 1955. Warden began appearing in smallish roles in many films, notably as Burt Lancaster's sergeant, coincidentally called Milton Warden, in From Here to Eternity (1953). He worked steadily as a service man in numerous films in the 1950s sweating in a submarine beside Clark Gable and Burt Lancaster in Run Silent, Run Deep (1958); a Jewish master sergeant in Darby’s Rangers (1958); The Thin Red Line (1964) as the cynical and brutal veteran sergeant. Warden was cast against type as Ben Campson, a mute simpleton in The Sound and the Fury (1959), Ritt’s unconvincing version of the William Faulkner novel. But it was back to his gruff persona in dozens of pictures over the next decades, gradually moving into more comedic roles. Some of his more memorable performances were Reef (1963), Who is Harry Kellerman and Why Is He Saying Those Terrible Things About Me? (1971) and The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz (1974). He also gained best supporting actor Oscar nominations with two Warren Beatty vehicles. In Shampoo (1975), he played a shallow rich man who mistakenly believes hairdresser Beatty is a “fairy” and couldn't possibly be screwing his wife, as well as the supernatural comedy Heaven Can Wait (1978). Warden made three films for Woody Allen: September (1987), Bullets Over Broadway (1994) and The Mighty Aphrodite (1995). He continued to be visible in such relatively recent films as While You Were Sleeping (1995), Ed (1996) and Bulworth (1998).

Martin Balsam (b. November 4, 1919 in The Bronx, New York City, New York—d. February 13, 1996, age 76, in Rome, Lazio, Italy) will always be remembered is the world-weary private detective Arbogast in Alfred Hitchcock's classic thriller Psycho (1960). Few sequences in film history are more terrifying than the one in which Arbogast climbs the staircase of the Bates house, only to be stabbed repeatedly by “Mother Bates”. The hapless detective's aghast expression as he tumbles down that staircase lingers in the memory. One of the most expensive sequences in the film, it involved an elaborate series of cinematic tricks. The camera was mounted on a special platform 90 feet above the action so that the Mother’s face would be concealed as she struck. Balsam's close-up also required some special trickery. As Hitchcock told Francois Truffaut: “We put a plastic tube on his face, and as the knife came up to it, we pulled a string, releasing the blood on his face down a line we had traced in advance. Then he fell back on the stairway.” Balsam made his Broadway stage debut in the unsuccessful comedy Ghost for Sale (1941). After time out for service in the Second World War, he returned to his native New York and began studying "The Method" at Lee Strasberg's Actors Studio. After many television appearances in such prestigious programs as Studio One, he landed impressive roles in two Tennessee Williams plays: The Rose Tattoo (1951) and Camino Real (1953). Many expected Balsam to receive the Best Supporting Academy Award for his work in Breakfast at Tiffany’s (1961), but he wasn't even nominated. When he did win the Oscar for A Thousand Clowns (1965), he told his fellow Actors Studio student Shelley Winters after the ceremony, “I won because I didn't get it for Breakfast at Tiffany’s.” Balsam’s other films include After the Fox (1966), Hombre (1967), Tora! Tora! Tora! (1970), The Taking of Pelham 123 (1974), Murder on the Orient Express (1974), St. Elmo’s Fire (1985), Unknown Soldiers (1985), and two stories of skullduggery in Washington D.C., Seven Days in May (1964) and All the President's Men (1976). In 1991 Martin Scorsese, remembering that Balsam had appeared in the original Cape Fear (1962), gave him the cameo role of a judge in his remake.

Hal Holbrook (b. February 17, 1925 in Cleveland, Ohio) is best known for his performance as Mark Twain, for which he won a Tony and the first of his ten Emmy Award nominations. Holbrook served in the Army in WWII, after which he attended Denison University, graduating in 1948. While at Denison, Holbrook’s senior honors project concerned Mark Twain. He’d later develop “Mark Twain Tonight”, the one-man show in which he impersonates the great American writer. He was just 28 when he began touring his one-man show, even performing for President Dwight D. Eisenhower at one point. Aside from the stage, Holbrook made his reputation primarily on television, and was memorable as Abraham Lincoln, as Senator Hays Stowe on The Bold Ones: The Senator (1970) and as Capt. Lloyd Bucher on Pueblo (1973). These roles brought him Emmy Awards, with Pueblo (1973) bringing him two, as Best Lead Actor in a Drama and Actor of the Year in a Special. In 1976 he took on perhaps his most famous film role, playing the informant Deep Throat in tonight’s film. In fact, television played a vital role in Holbrook’s career as the years passed and his film opportunities proved to be inconsistent. He co-starred with Katharine Ross in the TV movie Murder by Natural Causes (1979), and a year later he took on the role of a father whose teenager has run away in Off the Minnesota Strip. His credits also include the Civil War miniseries North and South (1985) and North and South, Book II (1986), in which he again played Abraham Lincoln. Around this time Holbrook also enjoyed a recurring role on Designing Women, alongside his third wife, the late Dixie Carter. In the 2000s he made appearances on popular programs like The West Wing, The Sopranos, ER and Sons of Anarchy. In 2008, at age 82, he became the oldest male performer ever nominated for an Academy Award, for his supporting turn in Into the Wild (2007). He was just 28 when he began touring his one-man show of the elderly Mark Twain, even performing for President Dwight D. Eisenhower at one point. In June 2005, he returned his Mark Twain Tonight to Broadway for a sold out, month-long run, receiving rave reviews from The New York Times and Wall Street
Journal. After his numerous portrayals of Abraham Lincoln, one of which won him an Emmy, he played a supporting role in Lincoln (2012), for which Daniel Day-Lewis won an Oscar.


Jane Alexander (b. Jane Quigley October 28, 1939 in Boston, Massachusetts) studied math as well as theater at Sarah Lawrence College in Bronxville, New York, where she thought computer programming might be a convenient alternative in case her acting dreams fell through. However, a chance to study at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, dissolved any other career interests but acting. She found critical success in 1967 when chosen to play the mistress of black boxer Jack Jefferson in the landmark production of The Great White Hope at the Arena Stage in Washington, D.C. opposite James Earl Jones. She and Jones both won Tony and Drama Desk Awards for their performances when the play went to Broadway the following year. Both also earned Academy Award nominations after making the transition to film. Although singled out for her supporting roles in All the President's Men (1976), Kramer vs. Kramer (1979) and her heartfelt leading role in Testament (1983), the Oscar trophy has remained elusive. On stage, she received a plethora of Tony nominations over the years for her work in 6 Rms Riv Vu (1972), Find Your Way Home (1974), First Monday in October (1978), The Visit (1991), The Sisters Rosenzweig (1993), and Honour (1998). Alexander also found success in TV playing the unglamorous role of Eleanor Roosevelt opposite Edward Herrmann’s FDR in the TV movies Eleanor and Franklin (1976) and Eleanor and Franklin: The White House Years (1977). She earned Emmy nominations for both productions. Her recent television appearances include roles on The Good Wife, Elementary and The Blacklist.

Ned Beatty (b. July 6, 1937 in Louisville, Kentucky) was once dubbed by Vanity Fair as “the busiest actor in Hollywood”. He is often cast as a chubby, cherubic character actor who rarely gets the girl, but almost always has the audience's sympathy, even when he plays bad guys. When asked, “How did you get into show business?” Beatty responded, “By hanging out with the wrong crowd.” The big city and bright lights did not come easy, though. The first ten years of Beatty's career were spent at the Barter Theater in Abingdon, Virginia. He then moved on to the Eric Playhouse in Pennsylvania, the Playhouse Theater in Houston, Texas, and the prestigious Arena Stage Company in Washington, D.C. In 1971, Beatty was chosen by director John Boorman for the role of Bobby Trippe in Deliverance (1972). Co-star Burt Reynolds and Beatty struck up a friendship together, and the two have worked in several films together, including White Lightning (1973), W.W. and the Dixie Dancekings (1975), and the abysmal Stroker Ace (1983). Beatty was most prolific in the 1970s starring in Robert Altman’s Nashville (1975), The Deadly Tower (1975), Silver Streak (1976), Wise Blood (1979), and as Lex Luthor's bumbling assistant, Otis, in the blockbuster Superman (1978). Beatty also starred in Rudy (1993), Spring Forward (1999), Hear My Song (1991), Prelude to a Kiss (1992), He Got Game (1998) and Cookie's Fortune (1999). Beatty's numerous television credits include three years on the Homicide: Life on the Street (1993), Streets of Laredo (1995), and The Boys (1993). Beatty was offered the role of John Doe in Se7en (1995) but rejected because the script was pure evil. More recent films include Charlie Wilson's War (2007), Toy Story 3 (2010) and Baggage Claim (2013).

F. Murray Abraham (b. October 24, 1939 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) is primarily a stage actor, but made his screen debut as an usher in the George C. Scott comedy They Might Be Giants (1971). By the mid-1970s, Murray had steady employment in Sidney Lumet's Serpico (1973), and in television
roles such as Kojak (1973). His film work of those years also included The Prisoner of Second Avenue (1975), The Sunshine Boys (1975), and All the President’s Men (1976). Abraham appeared as drug dealer Omar Suárez alongside Pacino again in the gangster film Scarface (1983). He also gained visibility voicing a talking bunch of grapes in a series of television commercials for Fruit of the Loom underwear. In 1985 he was honored with an Academy Award for Best Performance by an Actor in a Leading Role as envious composer Antonio Salieri in Amadeus (1984).

Lindsay Crouse (b. May 12, 1948 in New York City, New York) is known for The Insider (1999), House of Games (1987) and The Arrival (1996). She has been married to Rick Blue since 1998. She was previously married to David Mamet, with whom she has two children. Her daughter from this marriage is Girls’ star Zosia Mamet. As of 2017, she has appeared in four films that were nominated for the Academy Award for Best Picture: All the President’s Men (1976), The Verdict (1982), Places in the Heart (1984) and The Insider (1999). She was nominated for one Academy Award for Best Actress in a Supporting Role in 1985 for Places in the Heart (1984).


Alan J(ay) Pakula American director and producer, was born in the Bronx of Polish-Jewish parents. He is the son of Paul Pakula, co-owner of a Manhattan printing and advertising business, and the former Jeanette Goldstein. The family moved on from the Bronx to Long Beach, Long Island, and then to Manhattan. Pakula attended public schools in Long Beach and, though his interests were exclusively artistic and musical, spent two years at the Bronx High School of Science before getting himself shifted to the Hill School at Pottstown, Pennsylvania. An able and precocious student, he acted in school plays and wrote his own first one-acter at Hill, graduating in December 1944 when he was only sixteen.

For the two months when he was waiting to enter Yale, Pakula (who was already a regular playgoer and a devoted student of Variety) got himself a job as an office boy at the Leland Hayward Theatrical agency in Manhattan. One of his jobs was to deliver scripts to producers, directors, and actors, and he would take the scripts home overnight and study them before passing them on to their rightful recipients. By the time the two months was up, Pakula was thoroughly hooked on show business. Soon afterwards, as a liberal arts freshman at Yale, majoring in drama, he “would hide in the balcony of the Shubert Theatre in New Haven and watch Garson Kanin directing…. [I] was lost to the printing business forever.”

Pakula himself directed plays for the University Club at Yale and for the university’s radio station, as well as staging a graduate students’ production of Chekov’s The Anniversary. During the summer vacation of 1947 he also did a stint as actor and publicist with a stock company in Gloucester, Massachusetts. “The reason I became a director was that I’ve always loved actors,” Pakula told an interviewer. “The very first time I worked with actors on a stage, while I was still at Yale, I got this very exultant feeling that I was finally part of the universe, in the adolescent Thomas Wolfe sense.”

Pakula’s first job after he graduated in 1948 offered no such rewards—an associate of his father’s found him a post as assistant to the head of the Warner Brothers’ cartoon department. In his spare time he tested his directorial skills by staging several productions at the Circle Theatre on Los Angeles, including one of Jean Anouilh’s Antigone. His work there attracted the attention of the producer Don Hartman, who in 1950 lured him as a production apprentice at MGM. The following year, when Hartman went to Paramount as production head, he took Pakula with him as a production assistant and script analyst.

Hartman left Paramount a few years later, but Pakula stayed on. His first assignment as producer was Fear Strikes Out (1957), in which Anthony Perkins impersonates the baseball star Jim Piersall, wrestling with mental illness. Pakula chose as his director another Paramount rookie, Robert Mulligan, and the result was a modest but well-liked movie. Pakula had not lost his interest in the theatre, and while still at Paramount committed to New York to work as producer on several stage plays, including There Must Be a Pony (starring Myrna Loy), the Mary Martin musical Blood and Thunder, Comes a Day (with Judith Anderson and George C, Scott), and Laurette. The latter, about the actress Laurette Taylor, opened for a pre-Broadway run at the Shubert Theatre in New Haven, where Pakula had watched other tryouts as a Yale freshman. Five days later his star, Judy Holliday, became cortically ill, and the play closed.

Pakula returned to Hollywood, where he had gone into partnership with Robert Mulligan to launch an independent production company,. Pakula Mulligan Productions. Their first movie, directed by Mulligan, was To Kill a Mockingbird, released in 1963 through Universal-International. It was adapted from Harper Lee’s novel about a white lawyer (Gregory Peck) who takes on the defense of a black man charged with rape, and it was triumphantly successful, both commercially and critically, garnering three Oscars and a sheaf of nominations.

Pakula-Mulligan had another success with Love With a Proper Stranger (1963), set in New York’s little Italy, and dealing with a musician (Steve McQueen) and his pregnant girlfriend (Natalie Wood) torn between abortion and marriage. There was a more mixed reception for Baby, the Rain Must Fall (1965), in which Natalie Wood pays the price of Hollywood success. Up the Down Staircase (1967), about a young teacher (Sandy Dennis)starting out in a New York slum school, was a hit, but the Pakula-Mulligan partnership ended on a more somber note with The Stalking Moon (1964), an offbeat Western that failed to excite most critics, though it greatly impressed a few.

Although, as he says, he had become “typecast” as a producer, Pakula had never lost sight of his original ambition,
which was to direct. His chance came with *The Sterile Cuckoo* (1969, called *Pookie* in Britain), which he both directed and produced. Adapted by Alvin Sargent from a novel by John Nichols, it stars Liza Minnelli as a plain, eccentric, and lonely student at a New England college, embattled against the “weirdos” around her. She finds what she thinks is a soul mate in a prim and almost equally lonely boy (Wendell Burton) at a nearby men’s college, and throws herself into their love affair with such neurotic intensity that she scares him off. There were reviewers who found *The Sterile Cuckoo* plodding, monotonous, or schmaltzy, but most were touched, and Richard Schickel praised Pakula’s “courage and self-control” in letting “an essentially simple story play itself out in long scenes, undistracted by directorial busyness.”

The mild reservations expressed by some reviewers of Pakula’s first movie were swept away by *Klute* (1971). It examines the mutual dependence that grows up between Bree Daniel (Jane Fonda), an intelligent and successful New York call girl, threatened by a sadistic killer (Donald Sutherland), and the honorable bourgeois small-town private detective who becomes her protector. Pakula had once considered a career in psychoanalysis, and his interest in this subject is evident in the subtlety with which he develops the relationship, and also those between Bree and her clients (in which as she herself comes to realize, she satisfies both a need for power and her ambition to become an actress) …

The film elicited an Oscar-winning performance from Jane Fonda and a quieter but no less impressive one from Sutherland. Almost all the reviews praised the skill with which Pakula had built up the movie’s frightening atmosphere and tension. According to Hebert, Pakula’s preliminary investigations of the world of call-girls and pimps had convinced him that “it’s a very nervous, claustrophobic world,” which is why in many scenes he “virtually masked off great areas of the wide screen with silhouettes and shadows.” Sound is also used with great imaginative effect, especially the tape recordings made by the killer of his dealings with his call-girl victims. Pauline Kael called the picture “a film noir in color,” and it establishes Pakula as a director with an extraordinary talent for “transforming abstract evil into a palpable and frightening force.”

*Love and Pain and the Whole Damn Thing* (1973), called *The Widower* in Britain, also explodes an unlikely love relationship—this time between a strong-willed English spinster (Maggie Smith) who is terminally ill, and the young American (Timothy Bottoms) she meets while she is taking a last vacation in Spain …

There was a mixed but altogether more respectful reception for Pakula’s next film, which, however, suffered from a lackadaisical distribution. *The Parallax View* (1974) begins with the murder in the Seattle Space Needle of a popular Presidential candidate. The killer dies attempting to escape, and a Congressional committee writes the incident off as the work of a psychopath. However, a young Seattle newspaperman is not so easily satisfied, noting how many witnesses of the killing have themselves lost their lives, he sniffles conspiracy and sets out to infiltrate a mysterious secret brotherhood called the Parallax Society. Warren Beatty plays the intrepid reporter, and there are notable performances also from Paula Prentiss, Hume Cronyn, and William Daniels.

From the outset, Pakula makes virtuoso use of settings, lighting, framing, and editing to hint at a nightmare growing behind the familiar surfaces of everyday American life. The assassination scene evoked comparisons with Hitchcock, and many reviews noted the surreal and disorienting impact of the long scene in which the hero is psychologically tested for admittance to the Parallax Society. Richard T. Jameson called this Pakula’s most adventurous film “in its exploration of the medium itself as event: in its fascination with an environment in which places often possess a more forceful identity than people…in its complex appreciation of history as pseudo-event and above all in its forceful stylistic intuitions of the power and patterns of the imagination”—how it can be used “to reshape, even displace ‘reality.’” The most serious criticism of the movie was that, for all its technical bravura, it lacked the psychological resonance of *Klute*, seeming to “take place in an emotional vacuum.”

The plot in *The Parallax View*—investigative reporter stumbles on what begins to look like a massive conspiracy—bears a remarkable (though quite accidental) resemblance to the factual events recorded in *All the President’s Men*, in which the Washington Post reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein describe their inch-by-inch uncovering of the Watergate scandal. It was the skills that Pakula had demonstrated in *Parallax* and *Klute* that led Robert Redford to take him on as director of *All the President’s Men* (1976), to which Redford owned the rights, and which he produced. In particular, Redford needed Pakula’s gift for evoking menace by indirect visual suggestion.

Most critics agreed that Pakula had met the film’s special challenges with great skill, transforming the Washington of broad avenues and vistas into “a dark and scary place” in which “great public buildings loom up suddenly and oppressively out of the shadows” that also conceal Woodward’s mysterious informant Deep Throat.” Pakula overcame another potential handicap by patiently and painstakingly seeking out “the inner dynamics of the film’s many short scenes involving characters who have no lasting relationship with Woodward and Bernstein or anyone else in the film.” The striking authenticity of the scenes in the Post’s editorial offices is explained by the fact that Pakula spent nearly three months there before filming began. Redford gives a notably restrained performance as Bob Woodward, Dustin Hoffman a bravura one as the more volatile Bernstein, and both are outgunned by Jason Robards as the Post’s genial but formidable executive editor Ben Bradlee.

Dilys Powell wrote that “the two reporters proceed by tiny stages—through rebuffs, through unwilling admissions, a name gives a clue, a clue leads to another name, another fragment on information….The investigations, the interviews are conducted, most of them, in darkened rooms, even the exteriors
are often shadowed; it is a violent contrast with the newsroom, huge, bleak, not a corner escaping the brutal white light. It is to the newsroom that the two reporters belong. They are the servants of its demand for pitiless truth. And that, I suppose, is where the justification for the making of *All the President's Men* lies. The film is not about the fall of Nixon…It is a stunningly well-made reconstruction of a hunt for facts. One may have qualms, as I have, and still admire the brilliance of the job done. I don’t think anything as close to life—close in time, close in personalities—has been done in the cinema before.” The picture took four Oscars and was the top-grossing movie of 1976, earning twenty-six million dollars.

Pakula next turned to a genre that he had previously explored only as a producer, the Western. *Comes a Horseman* (1978), set at the end of World War II, has Jane Fonda as a tough homesteader, James Caan as the army vet to whom she sells a small parcel of land, and Jason Robards as the brutal cattle baron (in hock to an oil company) who needs their land. Philip French thought this “the genuine article—a slow, haunting, range-war picture, treating a classic plot with great obliquity….The film has the essential elements of a Western-cattle drives, a savage barroom brawl, a climactic showdown, an open-air hoedown, a philosophical old-timer (beautifully played by Richard Farnsworth…). …

Another Hollywood genre, the screwball comedy, is updated in *Starting Over* (1979) to commendable if imperfect effect. Burt Reynolds abandons his macho image to give a splendidly subtle performance as a journalist reluctantly divorced from his feminist songwriter wife (Candice Bergen)…. *Rollover* (1981), a kind of thriller set in the world of high finance, was praised more for Pakula’s direction than for its script. The plot involves the recognition by a corporate executive’s widow (Jane Fonda) and a financial trouble shooter (Kris Kristofferson) brought in to save a teetering bank that Mideastern oil interests have been draining Wall Street’s resources so as to control the economic balance of power. The discovery leads to melodramatic intrigue and a romance between the two. Critics, however, found the plot too contrived to be credible, and Richard Schickel considered the romance itself to be less than convincing, calling it “unfeeling, a sop to the audience’s conventional expectations.” He praised Pakula, however, as “a true stylist, a man who sees the world through a slow-panning lens darkly. For him, the corridors of power are menacingly dim and hushed, and by forcing the audience to dwell on his paranoid vision of that maze, the director commands a certain sober respect.”

*Rollover* was followed by *Sophie’s Choice* (1982), which attracted great attention and won an academy award for Meryl Streep as Best Actress. Adapted from William Styron’s novel with unusual fidelity by Pakula himself, the movie traces the experience of a young inexperienced Southern writer Stingo (Peter Mac Nichol), who has come to live in Brooklyn in the late 1940s. There he meets Sophie Zawistowska (Meryl Streep), a Polish-Catholic immigrant and Auschwitz survivor, and her lover, Nathan (Kevin Kline), a manic-depressive American Jew. The film ends with Sophie’s joining Nathan in suicide, and the young writer’s confronting real, as opposed to literary, tragedy. Although the film was considered mature and powerful by many reviewers, others found it pretentious and boring. They questioned whether Sophie’s choice was really inevitable or merely imposed on the movie to culminate a long tale of woe. Pauline Kael called the two-and-a-half-hour film “inert”—“a novel being talked to us.”

Pakula’s marriage to Hope Lange ended in divorce, and he was married again in 1973 to Hannah Cohn Boorstin. He has three stepchildren from his wife’s first marriage and two from Hope Lange’s. A large man with a red beard, Pakula is said to be “softly spoken, attentive and infinitely courteous.” He describes himself as “left of center” politically and as “a Jewish agnostic.”

A perfectionist, Pakula like to talk out a scene very thoroughly before going before the cameras, and then to shoot a large number of takes. Discussing *Starting Over*, he says “first I shoot the real situation, then what is funny about the situation, then sometimes I’ll get outrageous. Sometimes you get wonderful surprises that way, sometimes it’s just ludicrous. “Elsewhere he describes his approach as oblique. “I like trying to do thing which work on many levels, because I think it is terribly important to give an audience a lot of things they may not get as well as those they will, so that finally the film does take on a texture and is not just simplistic communication.”

Stanley Kauffmann once described Pakula as “just another artistically shallow slicknick, operating in the new psychological show business.” Not many would accept that judgment, though the most frequent criticism of Pakula’s work is that it is too bland and calculated. Richard T. Jamieson, writing in *Film Comment*, describes Pakula as a classicist in the Hollywood tradition: “Form itself is profoundly exciting to him; it constitutes an authentic and powerful event in itself, and that power comes across relentlessly on-screen….It is to those masters of the haunted screen, Lang and Murnau, that Pakula’s work suggests the greatest affinity of all.”

**Arthur Knight, review, The Hollywood Reporter, 1976:**

The number of American films dealing with political subjects can literally be counted on the fingers on one hand; and up until Warner Bros.' *All the President's Men*, the number of pictures that deal factually and realistically with the machinery and machinations of American politics was strictly zero. It isn't difficult to understand why the studios have tended to shy away from this subject. Politics may make strange bedfellows, but it is even more sharply divisive — as we are reminded every four years.
If half the voting population of the country stays away from a political movie because they don't approve of its politics, that movie is in trouble.

All of this actor-writer-producer Robert Redford must have been aware of when he bought the rights to the Robert Woodward-Carl Bernstein book for a hefty $450,000. And Warners when they budgeted the production at $5 million. (They were probably even more keenly aware of it as they watched the costs increase to a reported $8.5 million which even in these inflationary times is considerable.)

My guess is that all of them were backing at least as much upon the legendary drawing power of Redford and Dustin Hoffman as they were upon the public's sustained interest in the Watergate mess.

Just how right they were remains to be seen. $8.5 million is a hard nut to crack. But one can only admire the gutsiness of this whole operation. Not only does it name increasingly important names as the circle of guilt widened beyond the five bumbling burglars of the original break-in right up to the oval office itself; it doesn't stint on any aspect of production that might bring this story to the screen with the same professionalism that went into the original book.

Much has already been written on the authenticity of Warners' $450,000 replica of the Washington Post's newsroom — right down to flying out authentic refuse from the Post's own newsroom waste baskets. No less remarkable is the film's insistence on actual locales (including Watergate) wherever possible and the look-alike costing of so many of the key roles. Admiration extends beyond mere surface appearances, however. Under Alan J. Pakula's searching direction, the cast avoids most movie news-hound stereotypes, underlining instead the doubts and misgivings of the Post's upper editorial echelons as the implications of Watergate begin to unfold and the patient, dogged legwork of the Post's two investigative reports as they track down those individuals who, however reluctantly, might be able to supply another name or another fact.

It's like building a giant jigsaw puzzle, with the added frustration of first having to find the pieces before trying to find where they fit in the overall picture.

While there's an undoubted fascination in all this — the sense of fear surrounding those willing to talk as well as those who slam the door in their faces, the commingling of duty and disillusion on the part of so many of their informants, the cloak-and-dagger atmosphere surrounding the shadowy "Deep Throat," who would merely confirm or deny Woodward's conclusions — after a couple of hours it begins to wear thin.

You want the newsmen themselves, the protagonists in this film, to be in some sort of jeopardy. Apparently William Goldman, the screenwriter, sensed this too, for it's just about then that he throws in a sequence in which Redford, alone on Washington's dark, deserted streets, begins to run for his life. But from What? The threat never materializes, and the scene leaves us wanting either less or more.

Again, one has the impression that Goldman realized you can push a good thing just so far, or that audiences will follow reportorial plotting just so long. After the implication of John Mitchell in the conspiratorial circle, the film cuts abruptly to a teletype machine that taps out the ultimate disclosures leading up to Richard M. Nixon. I am afraid that those come more as a relief than an expurgation.

On purely the production level, however, All the President's Men can hardly be faulted. Redford and Hoffman are pungent but self-effacing as Woodward and Bernstein; Jason Robards turns in a powerful impersonation of executive editor Ben Bradlee; and Martin Balsam and Jack Warden carry conviction as subsidiary editors. Hal Holbrook, always lurking in the shadows, is an effective "Deep Throat," the informer who won't inform. But the truly memorable performance is Jane Alexander's too brief appearances as a minor bookkeeper whose revulsion at the Watergate disclosures impels to tell all she knows. In a way, she is the voice of all of us whose moral sensibility was shocked by the Watergate revelations, and for whom the sanctity of high office can never again mean the same.

Ron Dorfman: book review of All the President’s Men, Chicago Tribune, 1974:

Editor's note: With the recent passing of longtime Washington Post editor Ben Bradlee, we look back 40 years to the Chicago Tribune's book review of "All the President's Men" by Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward.

Everyone will have his own favorite anecdote from the pages of "All the President's Men," one he will repeat to uninitiates at cocktail parties. Mine is the story of a quarrel that took place in the Wall Street Journal's hospitality suite in the Washington Hilton after the White House Correspondents Association's annual dinner last year. The principals were Edward Bennett Williams, famed criminal defense attorney, and Patrick Buchanan, the acid-tongued White House speech writer. Williams, who also represents the Washington Post and the Democratic National Committee and owns the Washington Redskins, was chastising Buchanan for the conduct of the President's men in the 1972 election.

"Dirty, Pat, dirty election. Aren't you ashamed?" accused Williams.

Buchanan replied that Williams was a sore loser, and that what the Watergate burglars did to the Democrats wasn't any more reprehensible than Williams spying on the Miami Dolphins.

"It stinks," said Williams of the Nixon reelection effort. How about some of your clients, Ed?" retorted Buchanan, reminding the other guests that Williams had defended Bobby Baker and Jimmy Hoffa, among others. Williams protested there was "a difference."

"What's this big difference, Ed?" inquired Buchanan. Williams replied: "I didn't run any of my clients for President."
"All the President's Men" ends where the consciousness of most Americans about Watergate began, two weeks after the Williams-Buchanan imbroglio, as the President announced on national television that he was firing John Dean and accepting the resignations of Haldeman, Ehrlichman, and Kleindienst, and Ron Ziegler made a public apology to the Washington Post and to Woodward and Bernstein personally. There are a few details that came along later — little things like the revelations of the Ellsberg psychiatrist burglary and the 18 1/2 -minute tape erasure — and are mentioned in a kind of code. But basically this is the explanation of how the Watergate story was developed by two young Washington Post reporters whose repeated double-byline on the front page of the paper was gleefully collapsed by their colleagues into "Woodstein."

Woodward and Bernstein have their rewards — a Pulitzer Prize (awarded not to them but to their newspaper), considerable fame, a fortune in the making (Robert Redford has bought the movie rights to this book for a reported $450,000, and paperback rights brought a healthy $1 million), and the satisfaction of an important job done extraordinarily well. But their book is our reward — "we" being reporters everywhere.

It is our reward because it demonstrates that American journalism can be, and in its crucial hour was, conducted with the highest standards of ethics, the greatest concern for public interest, and a near-suicidal commitment to the pursuit of truth and justice. Which is not to say that the protagonists here were saintly. They made errors of fact; in frustration they compromised at least one of their sources; they substituted political considerations for journalistic ones in determining whether and when to go with a story. The language in the Washington Post's newsroom was often as salty as that in the Oval Office. But unlike the President's men, the men and women of the Post treated the honor of their profession not as window dressing but as their stock in trade.

Few news organizations could have withstood alone the kind of pressure that was being applied to the Post. Indeed, when CBS News scheduled two long reports summarizing the Post's stories on Watergate, the second report was trimmed from 15 to seven minutes after the White House complained. "This is the hardest hardball that's ever been played in this town," the Post's executive editor, Ben Bradlee, had warned his reporters.

The book itself is a delight. It is next to impossible to write a first-person account in the first-person plural, and the writers adopt the happy expedient of writing in the third person, so that the references are to "Bernstein" or "Woodward" but never to "we" or "us." The result allows for passages such as "Bernstein knew that Woodward couldn't write very well. One office rumor had it that English was not Woodward's native language."

In the course of a gripping narrative, rather like a good detective story, we are treated to gossipy peeks behind the scenes of power in Washington (Ken Clawson of the White House staff hysterically upset not because the Post was about to print a story saying he had confessed to writing the infamous "Canuck letter," but because his confession had been given one night to Post reporter Marilyn Berger over drinks in her apartment and he was afraid the story might reveal that, too; Clawson was a Nixonian family man, after all). More important, we are treated to a detailed description of the process of digging out news in Washington that no one in authority wants to have dug out.

White House complaints about "source stories" — stories unattributed to named individuals — would have had us believe that the Post's reporters were typical Washington "leaks" being retailed by the President's enemies. On the contrary, we learn, their sources were far from anxious to talk, hardly ever told all they knew, and had to be cajoled, pampered, browbeaten or tricked into talking at all. Only one source, the still-mysterious government official code-named "Deep Throat," had an overview of the situation, and even he would rarely go beyond confirming information the reporters had obtained elsewhere.

For this book, Bernstein and Woodward prevailed upon a few of their previously anonymous sources to reveal themselves, so we learn, for instance, that Hugh Sloan, treasurer of the Committee to Re-Elect the President, was a reluctant but important source, and also that he led the reporters to their one serious mistake — a page-one story saying Sloan had told the grand jury that H.R. Haldeman controlled the Watergate slush fund. The Post was badly burned on that story, because Sloan had meant to say only that he would have told the grand jury about Haldeman had he been asked, but neither the grand jury nor Judge Sirica, in his questioning of Sloan during the trial of the Watergate burglars, asked the right question.

In fact, one of the curiosities of the two reporters' story is that it is as much a search for the right questions as it is a search for the answers. It took the reporters nearly four months before they began to ask themselves, much less anyone else, whether it was possible that the Mister Big of this plot could be the President of the United States. It was just a notation from one of Woodward's interviews, indicating that Alexander Butterfield's job at the White House had something to do with "internal security" — a notation that went unexplored for nearly a year — that prompted a question leading eventually to the Senate Watergate Committee's discovery of the White House taping system. This, in turn, led to the Saturday Night Massacre and to almost all of the White House fireworks that have occurred since.

Vincent Canby, "‘All the President’s Men’, Spellbinding Film, New York Times, April 8, 1976:

Newspapers and newspapermen have long been favorite subjects for movie makers—a surprising number of whom are former newspapermen, yet not until "All The President's Men," the riveting screen adaptation of the Watergate book by Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward, has any film come remotely close to being an accurate picture of American journalism at its best.
"All The President's Men," directed by Alan J. Pakula, written by William Goldman and largely pushed into being by the continuing interest of one of its stars, Robert Redford, is a lot of things all at once: a spellbinding detective story about the work of the two Washington Post reporters who helped break the Watergate scandal, a breathless adventure that recalls the triumphs of Frank and Joe Hardy in that long-ago series of boys' books, and a vivid footnote to some contemporary American history that still boggles the mind.

The film, which opened yesterday at Loews Astor Plaza and Tower East Theaters, is an unequivocal smash-hit — the thinking man's "Jaws."

Much of the effectiveness of the movie, which could easily have become a mishmash of names, dates and events, is in its point of view, which remains that of its two, as yet unknown reporters. Carl Bernstein (Dustin Hoffman), highly competitive and a little more experienced than his partner, and Bob Woodward (Robert Redford), very ambitious and a dog for details.

It's through their eyes — skeptical, hungry, insatiably curious — that "All The President's Men" unfolds. It begins logically on the night of June 17, 1972, when five men were arrested in an apparent break-in at the headquarters of the Democratic National Committee in the Watergate complex in Washington, and continues through the spectacular series of revelations, accusations and admissions of guilt that eventually brought the Nixon Presidency to its conclusion.

Like Bernstein and Woodward in the course of their investigation, the film maintains bifocal vision, becoming thoroughly absorbed in the seemingly unimportant minutiae out of which major conspiracies can sometimes be reconstructed, yet never for long losing sight of the overall relevance of what's going on. Although "All The President's Men" is first and foremost a fascinating newspaper film, the dimensions and implications of the Watergate story obviously give it an emotional punch that might be lacking if, say, Bernstein and Woodward had been exposing corruption in the Junior League. Thus the necessity of the director's use of newsreel footage from time to time — the shots of President Nixon's helicopter making a night landing at the White House, which open the film; the television images of the President entering the House of Representatives, and of other familiar folk including former Attorney General John N. Mitchell, former Vice President Agnew, and, especially, Representative Gerald R. Ford announcing the nomination of President Nixon at the 1972 Republican National Convention.

Though the film will undoubtedly have some political impact, its strength is the virtually day-by-day record of the way Bernstein and Woodward conducted their investigations, always under the supervision of a kindly avuncular Ben Bradlee (Jason Robards), The Post's managing editor, who (in this film) gives out advice, caution and, occasionally, a "well-done," acting as Dr. Gillespie to their Dr. Kildares.

Mr. Redford and Mr. Hoffman play their roles with the low-keyed, understated efficiency required since they are, in effect, the straight men to the people and the events they are pursuing. The film stays out of their private lives but is full of unexpected, brief, moving glimpses into the private lives of their subjects, including a frightened bookkeeper (Jane Alexander) for the Committee to Re-elect the President. Donald Segretti (Robert Walden), the "dirty tricks" man, and Hugh Sloan Jr. (Stephen Collins), the committee treasurer, and his wife (Meredith Baxter).

The manners and methods of big-city newspapering, beautifully detailed, contribute as much to the momentum of the film as the mystery that's being uncovered. Maybe even more, since the real excitement of "All The President's Men" is in watching two comparatively inexperienced reporters stumble onto the story of their lives and develop it triumphantly, against all odds.

Robert Redford, Bob Woodward, and Carl Bernstein in a wonderful conversation at the LBJ Library on the 35th anniversary of All The President's Men, April 21, 2011. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UVrGZxpBEA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UVrGZxpBEA)

An eight-minute interview, done in 1976, with Alan J. Pakula about All The President's Men: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t8eMpfMlR8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t8eMpfMlR8)

COMING UP IN THE FALL 2017 BUFFALO FILM SEMINARS XXXV

October 17: Andrei Tarkovsky Nostalgia 1983
October 24: Wim Wenders Wings of Desire 1987
October 31: Mike Nichols Postcards from the Edge 1990
November 7: Tran Anh Hung The Scent of Green Papayas 1993
November 14: Hayeo Miyazaki The Wind Rises 2013
November 21: Andrey Zvyagintsev Leviathan 2014
November 28: Pedro Almodóvar Julieta 2016
December 5: Billy Wilder Some Like it Hot 1959

CONTACTS:...email Diane Christian: engdc@buffalo.edu... email Bruce Jackson bjackson@buffalo.edu...for the series schedule, annotations, links and updates: [http://buffalofilmseminars.com](http://buffalofilmseminars.com)...to subscribe to the weekly email informational notes, send an email to addto list@buffalofilmseminars.com...for cast and crew info on any film: [http://imdb.com](http://imdb.com)

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