

12 Angry Men

This film is perfect. I know that is quite the statement, and to be honest I am biased, as this is my favourite standalone movie, the Lord of the Rings trilogy being my favourite film story, but I honestly find that this movie has no flaw. I had watched this film when I was in Law class, in my third year of high school, and I remember just being captivated despite the fact that it was black and white, the set was mostly a singular room, and it was just about a trial.

To set the scene of the film, we see a young man look disheartened, as he sees the 12 jurors go to a side room to make their decision on the boy's fate. As they go into the room, we see them take their time getting ready, making small talk, one of the men has a ball game to catch, one of them talks about his son, they all seem to be struggling with the heat. They go into their decision making, one that must be unanimous, and one by one they start stating that the boy is guilty, until they get to juror number 7, and he is just unsure, he doesn't believe he is innocent necessarily, just that he is unsure, and the movie takes off from there.

I do not want to explain the rest of the movie, since that would ruin the watching experience, but I will go into the aspects of the movie, and why they are done to perfection, starting with characters and acting. We never actually know the names of the 12 men, not until the end of the movie when juror number 7 gets asked by one of the other men his name, but the trial has already been decided, their names don't matter, their words, actions, stances give so much more life than a name could, we know every single one of them, just from watching them interact with each other. We see some of them are not taking it seriously, some who are, but for the wrong reasons, and some with good intentions. I am telling you; you are going to change the character you hate the most about 3 or 4 times, and they will infuriate you, but there not necessarily bad people, and this leads into the acting. Every single actor is magnificent, knowing just how much they need to bring to the film, if their role needs them to be more subdued, then they will do that, more intense, you got. The two leads show this especially, Henry Fonda and Lee J Cobb are incredible, Fonda playing the hero, if you would call anyone of them that, juror number 7, and Cobb playing his most intense challenger.

I will not tell you the verdict they decided on, for that is the point of watching the movie, but the verdict they decide on seems to be the right one, but here's the thing, we don't know if it is, it is just the decision they made, we get no hint about whether their verdict was actually correct, so we must simply see how they saw it, and judge for ourselves. The scenes where they deliberate over evidence is filled with tension and intensity, it makes you feel like your watching some action thriller with the biggest stakes in the world, and while they are deciding the fate of this young man, they are simply 12 men, in a singular room.

The technical aspects of the film are so well done as well, I recommend you pay attention to the camera angles, and how they change in relation to certain characters, it really helps paint the picture of the story is going. There are numerous long sequences, almost like it is a play, and so many intricacies that I will not be able to explain, as I do not know the ins and outs of the film industry, especially the one in the 1950s.

Go watch this film, if you are going to watch any black and white film, this is the one to watch.

