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The 10 Best Movies About News Reporters

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The Bottom Line The definitive list of Hollywood's TEN BEST, all-time greatest movies about reporters, news professionals, and journalists. The Top 10 Reporter Films of All Time!

Journalists, newspapermen, reporters, columnists, and foreign correspondents. They make the headlines and print All the News that's Fit to Print. Hollywood cinema has always had a love affair with the news reporters and there are dozens of excellent films about the writers who report the news. Here is my list of the 10 best, greatest, most excellent news reporter films in the history of cinema. Hope you enjoy it!

***** **TOP 10 FILMS ABOUT NEWS REPORTERS** *****

As always, I count them *UP!*

1. ***All the Presidents Men*** (1976)

Reporters: Carl Bernstein (Dustin Hoffman), Bob Woodward (Robert Redford)

This is a hybrid between a political crime documentary and a biopic on the two famous Washington Post reporters who dug into the infamous Watergate burglaries that occurred prior to the 1972 presidential election, and that were eventually traced directly to the White House where all fingers pointed to Richard Nixon and his staff. The break-in itself proved to be but the tip of the iceberg in Republican party dirty politics, illegal activities, and outright corruption. This is the kind of movie that reveals how important solid journalism is to a free society, and the immense peril that true freedom faces today as newspaper circulation declines and people get "news" from non-authoritative sources that lack resources and professionalism to do serious investigative journalism.

2. ***Foreign Correspondent*** (1940)

Reporter: Johnny Jones (Joel McCrea)

There's big stories in Europe as Hitler rises in power, but the European correspondents currently on the scene aren't getting to the guts of the stories: they don't pack a punch, and they don't sell newspapers. So the editor of the New York Globe comes up with a plan: he'll send an exciting young crime beat reporter to Europe to spice things up. Once there, reporter Jones interviews a diplomat who suddenly turns up missing. Hooking up with the hot-looking daughter of a peace movement leader and tracking down the missing diplomat, in spite of a labyrinthine plot filled with constant danger, unbelieving police and the looming threat of global war, the truth shall be uncovered. A Hitchcock classic!

3. ***The Year of Living Dangerously*** (1982)

Reporter: Guy Hamilton (Mel Gibson)

Action-packed drama of revolution in the Phillipines as budding young news corespondent Guy



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Hamilton (Gibson) gets sent to replace a retiring veteran. After some initial rough spots, he gets a boost from Billy (Linda Hunt). Romantic entanglements and political subterfuge ensue. Chinese commies are running guns to Phillippine rebels... sounds like the perfect time for sparks of romance to ignite. Hunt is brilliant as Billy, the conniving, complex, marvelously savvy, and deliciously ethical Indonesian whose character contrasts brilliantly with the selfishness of Hamilton. The magic of this film is all about the relationship between Gibson and Hunt.

4. **The Passenger** (aka, **Professione: Reporter**) (1975)

Reporter: David Locke (Jack Nicholson)

David Locke is a foreign correspondent in Africa, hating life while covering a guerrilla war in Africa. At least that's who he is until he finds a dead man at his hotel. Stealing the unfortunate stiff's ID, belongings and appointment book, Locke "disappears" and assumes the identity of the dead man. It's a slow movie, and an unusually quiet role for a big presence like Nicholson, but the slow-building suspense is magnificent. This is often regarded as director Michaelangelo Antonioni's finest work.

5. **Superman** (1978)

Mild Mannered Reporter: Clark Kent (Christopher Reeve)

Superman's father, Jor-El, shunned by the council on Krypton, sends his baby son to the distant planet Earth, six galaxies away. The baby's starship crash-lands on the Kent's family farm, whereupon the Kents adopt the young infant as their own, naming him Clark. He discovers his powers as a teen, eventually moving off to Metropolis, where disguised as a mild-mannered reporter for a great metropolitan newspaper, he'll fight a never-ending battle for truth, justice, and the American way. (And he'll start doing that by conquering Lex Luthor --- the self-styled world's greatest criminal mastermind.) Can Superman thwart Luthor's evil plans?

6. **Bruce Almighty** (2003)

Reporter: Bruce Nolan (Jim Carrey)

Bruce Nolan is not a happy camper. As a reporter, he's handed mediocre assignments like the baking of a giant cookie and the anniversary of the Maid of the Mist at Niagra Falls. Meanwhile, rival reporter, Evan Backstabber, lands juicy assignment and a juicy news anchor job. Bruce blames God. God decides to teach Bruce a little lesson in humility with hilarious consequences, including the epic parting of a bowl of tomato soup and a little bit of poetic justice. Great cast: Morgan Freeman is a sublime God. Jennifer Aniston and Catherine Bell are both hot looking. And Steve Carell is outstanding as Evan.

7. **Sweet Smell of Success** (1957)

Reporter: J.J. Hunsecker (Burt Lancaster)

This is such a slickly stylish film of a gritty New York, where newspaperman J.J. Hunsecker makes and breaks careers with a good word or a bad word in his biting columns. When a talented jazz musician decides that Hunsecker's sister looks mighty fine to him, Hunsecker and press agent Falco (Tony Curtis) do whatever it takes to discredit him. If they can't do it through mere slander, then framing the guy with the help of a corrupt police officer will do the trick. (Unless of course the deception should be discovered, then all bets would be off.) Listen to the dialog on this one....it's got the kind of staccato rhythm of some of the best Bogart flicks of the 40s and both Lancaster and Curtis are brilliantly rotten to the core.

8. *The Killing Fields* (1984)

Reporter: Sydney Schanberg (Sam Waterston)

This is a brutal movie depicting one of the most brutal periods in history, the rise of Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, where millions of people were slaughtered in the name of re-education and "purity". The brutality is told through the eyes of a journalistic interpreter (Dith Pran) to Pulitzer-prize winning New York Times journalist, Sidney Schanberg. Pran makes it possible for Schanberg and other western journalists to escape the tyranny of Khmer Rouge, though he himself must face terrifying hardship with no reasonable hope of escape. (Haing Ngor, who had never before acted, took home an Oscar for his role as Pran).

9. *Absence of Malice* (1981)

Reporter: Megan Carter (Sally Field)

Reporter Megan Carter is manipulated. First, by scheming police officials then by the man they want to set up. Police have nothing but a big fat nothing to go on in their search for a murder suspect, so they arrange for a leak to happen. A false leak, as it turns out, and naive reporter Carter eats it up. She prints a false story, maligning Gallagher (Paul Newman), an honest liquor dealer (as if there could be any other kind). She later compounds the damage by maligning an honest, gentle-spirited friend of Gallagher's. The lawyers say Gallagher is not entitled to justice, but perhaps there is a way to at least get satisfaction. Sally Field's character is a bit of a scumbag, but this is a memorable role for Newman!

10. *Broadcast News* (1987)

Reporter: Tom Grunnick (William Hurt)

This is a stylish film that's more about personalities and superficialities than it is about journalism per se. In a TV newsroom, we meet the ambitious (Holly Hunter), the dedicated (Albert Brooks), and the image (William Hurt)...not to mention the smug and pretentious (Jack Nicholson). Changes are in the works. The movie seems a bit dated in an era when broadcast news has been marginalized by media outlets (cable and internet) with even lower standards than the ridiculous superficiality of television, but such is the insanity of our age.

There you have it! Ten of my favorite reporter movies of all time. Got another one (and I don't mean "*Fletch*") that you think should have been included?? Drop me a comment...I just love chatting films!

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