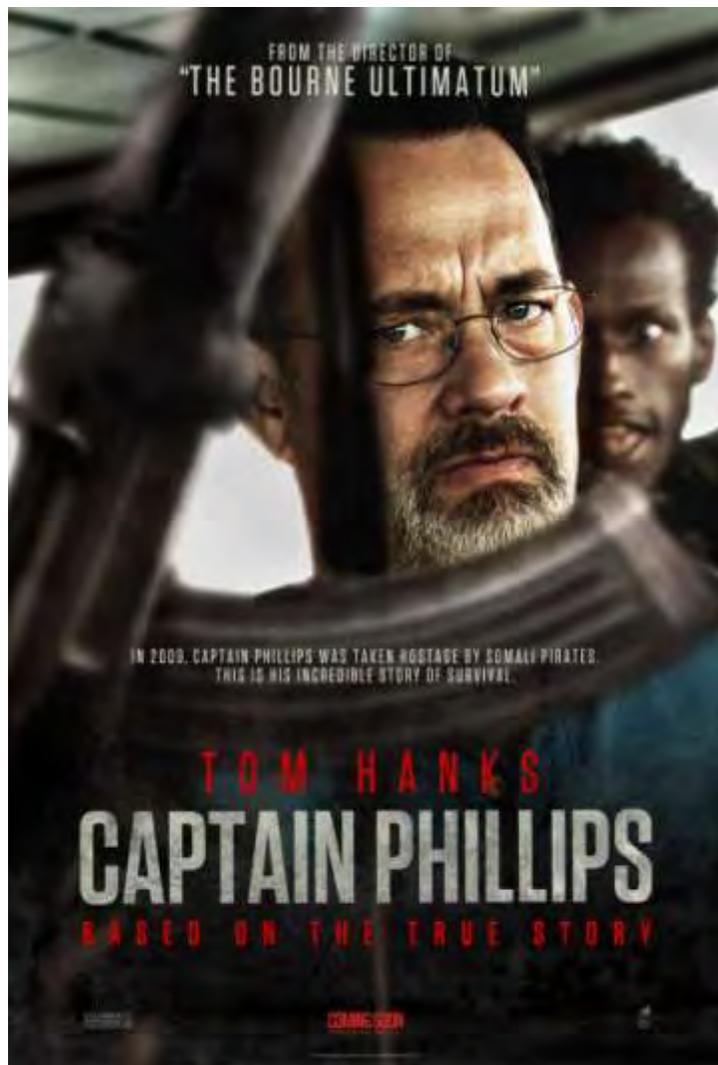


Captain Phillips a Movie Review

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Ever since my father took me to see my first movie (Shane with Alan Ladd) I have had a love affair with Hollywood (I even did my 40 day pioneering in Santa Monica). When they say that one picture is worth a thousand words, I totally agree. Other movies that I have loved include Field of Dreams (one man's absolute faithfulness to see an ideal to its end), Secretariat (one woman's love, determination and perseverance to fulfill her father's dream), Seabiscuit and Cinderella Man (the triumph of the little man in spite of the longest of odds), The Verdict and the Hurricane, (two movies about righteousness triumphant) and The Family Man (where true love and heart triumphs over external success). These days it is tough for me since my wife rules out going to see any movie that includes sex, violence, horror, bad language or immorality. That usually only leaves movies like Sweet Lorraine (a good movie to take a long nap in), but somehow includes one of her favorites, Fargo which sports one of the most gruesome scenes ever imagined (a bad guy being graphically fed into a wood chipper). She also loves Seinfeld (which she watches every single night) because nearly every situation in real life is covered somewhere in one of the episodes. Larry David is

certainly on a par with Norman Rockwell and Charles Schulz for his ability to capture the true heart and essence of America.

Speaking of Hollywood, (a place many Americans feel is overly dominated by the Jewish population), I have suddenly become quite connected. When one of my "nephews" graduated with a degree in film from the University of Denver, I told him that when he got to Hollywood he should look up some of my friends and relatives. I have a cousin, who has written two of the most popular movies of the past year; a second cousin, who graduated from UCLA law school and is now very successfully practicing film law and a grade school buddy who started his own studio and is responsible for producing both the Hurricane and the Family Man.

A couple of weeks ago I went to see the most recent movie that my cousin had written—Prisoners—which lead the nation in sales for several weeks. My cousin was working a job in Brooklyn when Sony bought the screenplay to this movie. He and his wife and two small children immediately packed up and moved to Los Angeles. (They did still keep their rent-controlled apartment in the Park Slope neighborhood of Brooklyn—just in case). After arriving in Los Angeles he wrote the big seller Contraband with Mark Wahlberg and Albert Nobbs with Glenn Close (more of an art film—very well done and reviewed, although it didn't make much money in the theatres). He is currently working in Atlanta on a series for one of the cable networks. But back to Prisoners—the number one hit in America in September. It displayed wonderful performances by Hugh Jackman and Jake Gyllenhaal (I'm more prone to his sister Maggie (Stranger than Fiction), but that's another story. I must have told 50 people at the theatre that Aaron Guzakowski was my cousin and in fact, at the end of the movie, his name is the first one to fill the screen after the closing title. I was so proud of him (almost as if I had something to do with writing the movie myself) – until tonight. Actually, I must tell you that my wife, having heard about the plot of the film refused to see it and when I told her the story before going to sleep, she was haunted by nightmares all night. The movie is rated 3 ½ stars from the critics—it is very well written, acted incredibly by Jackman and Gyllenhaal and failed to get 4 stars only because the critics said it was a bit too long. The movie is about serial killers—sick perverted people (and it even takes a moment to tear down the Catholic Church a bit). Yet, even with all that going for it, I began to wonder, whether it was really necessary to have been written. Contraband also dealt with drug running, betrayal, evil and other fun

subjects, but at least there was a strong thread of family loyalty intertwined. And the Glenn Close art film was really very good.

Which brings me to tonight. Yesterday my wife completed a long, tough busy week teaching music chorus and piano. Usually we sit down on the couch and watch the only TV cop movie that she has ever enjoyed—Blue Bloods. It's the first family cop show that I have ever seen. Great grandpa used to be the New York City police commissioner. Dad (Tom Selleck) is the current police commissioner, two of his sons are cops and his daughter is the District Attorney. Much of the dialog revolves around the family all sitting together at mealtime and the great/grand kids asking probing questions, while the adult siblings argue about what is really acceptable and above board. Sometimes it seems that they just throw some crime into the show for effect. But after her long week, even last night's episode was too gruesome as it dealt with bullying and teenage suicide. Then, on top of all this, we got an emergency call that our daughter had just totaled her new car. So after 3 hours on the phone, my wife basically felt as if it was she who had just totaled her car.

Tonight she said that she was willing to go to a movie, but that if it was intense in any way, she would move to another theatre. So obviously she did not want to see the remake of Carrie, but she loves Tom Hanks and was willing to give Captain Phillips a try. This movie is actually incredibly intense and she kept her legs crossed and held my hand throughout the length of the film, but it was one of the best movies that I have ever seen. It conveys the greatness of America. The real heart behind why 40,000 people stand up, salute and sing God Bless America when a veteran is introduced at a ball game. The greatness of an America that saved Europe in World War I, saved the world in World War II and saved Korea from being overrun by the Communists (as well as saving Father's life). It is the America that Col Pak loved so much that he kissed the tanks that saved his life and the America that sent General Douglas MacArthur and Alexander Haig to save Father's homeland and Father's life. The America that brought Major General Ted W Sorensen, a veteran of World War II, the Korean War, the Marshall Plan and the first pilot to fly a 727 to fall in love with CAUSA and become Illinois' first AFC President.

The essence of Captain Phillips, which is a true story tells about how America attempted to rescue a commercial boat captain from Somali pirates. The amazing thing about the movie is that it brings out so much of what is great about America. As the French philosopher Arnold Toynbee prophesized about 200 years ago, "America is great because she is good—and if she ever ceases to be good then she will cease to be great." In the film the greatness of America all comes together. The Navy sends a battleship, an aircraft carrier and the Navy Seals from all over the world, to rescue this civilian cargo ship captain—because he is an American—because he is a human being and because he has a soul. The pirates are only out for the money and they fear the war-lords that oversee their every move. But America is willing to spend millions of dollars for an operation to save one human being. And until they are sure that the captain will be safe, they will not even fire their supersonic weapons to kill his captors. The irony of seeing their little life-boat in contrast with these huge ships, helicopters and navy seals is amazing. This is the America that would stand with David against Goliath

The America that stands on a constitution that even compels them to read the kidnapper his rights before arresting him. As the credits rolled, I thought that the pirate is better off spending thirty three years in a federal prison in Terre Haute, Indiana than he would have been returning to his native war torn Somalia. I left the theatre in tears and immediately began to witness to the on duty police officer, passionately imploring him to see the movie—to remind him of the greatness of the country he serves.

Post Script: This past week I was invited to teach a class in "Local and State Politics" in one of Chicago's community colleges. The professor had been first met by Chicago CARP a number of years ago and I had just recently met him at a local political conference. I'm sure the professor wanted me to talk about my county job which helps people appeal their real estate taxes. However, I was able to merge that position in with many of Father's materials that I used as the Midwest Director of the Universal Peace Federation.. I talked about how, as opposed to the corruption (five of our past seven governors and numerous city and county officials have gone to federal prison) of so many of Illinois' elected officials, True Parents have given us a vision for world peace and one world family under God. The professor wanted me to stop in order for the students to have a chance to ask questions, but I insisted on continuing, because I knew that the answers to their questions would be learned in hearing the word of God through True Parents.

Even though a native Chicagoan is leading our country and a majority of his advisors call Chicago their home, this city is leading the entire nation in the number of murders committed every day. The last time President Obama visited Chicago seventeen people were shot in the twenty four hours that he was here. Earlier, one teenager, who had just returned from marching in his inaugural parade was gunned down four blocks from his home. America is only great because she has been good. The cheers I hear during the singing of the Star Spangled Banner, sung before the beginning of every sporting event in America tell me that that greatness is still alive. Tonight I felt that in spite of all the crazy movies, songs and television shows out there, a film like Captain Phillips can still be written and Americans can be reminded about how great God created and meant this country to be.