

# Movie Review

## Presumed Innocent falls short

By DIAHANN NADEAU  
Herald Special

Scott Turow's gripping courtroom drama/murder mystery has lot something in its translation to the big screen. Gone are some of the complexities of personality and passion that made the book so hard to put down.

Without these shadings, Presumed Innocent - the movie - doesn't quite convey the anger, betrayal, and uncontrolled lust that lit up the book. This is unfortunate, because it certainly cuts down on the impact of the story, and of the denouement. However, Presumed Innocent is still a good movie, a very watchable drama. It just isn't a great movie.

Harrison Ford plays Rusty Sabich, a straight arrow deputy prosecuting attorney in a big city. His boss, Raymond Horgan (Brian Dennehy), is running for re-election after 12 years on the job. Horgan shouldn't lose, but a brutal murder happens at just the wrong time and upsets Horgan's chances.

The sexy and savvy prosecuting attorney Carolyn Polhemus (Greta Scacchi) is killed in her apartment. "If Horgan can't protect his

own attorneys from murder, how can he protect the rest of the city?" goes the opponents rhetoric.

Rusty is appointed to head the investigation. There's only one problem - Rusty had an affair with Carolyn and has not lost his obsession for her.

The election loss sets in motion something far more heart-stunning than a change of office; Sabich is off the case and suddenly all the evidence casts him as 'The Murderer.' Before Sabich can digest this, he's on trial for murder. The big question in the movie and the book, is did he indeed do it? Could out intense hero be the murderer? One of the major flaws in the movie is that the affair is not given the weight and attention it deserves, to give us reason to believe that Rusty would and could have done the deed. You can't fit a whole book in a two-hour movie, but you must be careful about what you choose to discard.

The trial takes up a lot of the movie and is fairly well done, but again lacks the complexities of the novel. The ending has been done differently, and to my mind, far less skillfully than the book. Who knows why director Alan J. Pakula

decided to alter it? There is a loss of impact and a crucial twist is not included.

Ford is incredibly intense as Sabich - the man never cracks a smile. It's a good performance, but it doesn't offer a lot of variety.

Bonnie Bedelia is excellent as his wife Barbara, a character who was far better developed in the book. Scacchi is beautiful and sexy, but about 10 years too young for the role.

The character of Carolyn Polhemus has been completely altered by this age change. Dennehy is as good as always as Horgan, and Raul Julia is silky and low-keyed as Sandy Stern, the brilliant defense attorney. John Spencer is terrific as Detective Lipranzer (Lip), and Paul Winfield hams it up as Darren Lyttle, a judge given to hamming it up.

Presumed Innocent could have been a better movie, there's no doubt about it. A lot of blame has to go to Alan J. Pakula for his bare-bones screenplay and his soul-less direction.

But fortunately, the cast and the story are better than the director, and thus Presumed Innocent is well worth seeing.

## TV viewers are monitored

There are two basic ways for TV networks - and advertisers - to discover what TV programs Canadians are watching.

The oldest survey (launched in the mid-1950s) is the BBM TV diary. BBM, an industry association of broadcasters and advertising firms, sends diaries to more than 20,000 households across Canada. Every week, the completed diaries are returned and the information recorded and analyzed.

A.C. Nielson of Canada also conducts surveys - by two methods. One is the same diary method BBM uses, the other is an electronic survey conducted through a "people meter."

And the people meter - in use in Canada for about a year - indicates fewer people are watching TV in most time periods than the diaries had indicated, Derek Suchard, media writer for Playback Strategy, reported in a recent newspaper article.

That's no surprise to many of the people, including this columnist, who have ever filled in a TV diary for one of the companies.

The electronic method - a small box is plugged into a TV and records what is watched - is more accurate.

BBM started installing its own version of electronic monitoring earlier this year.

For the people being surveyed, however, diaries are more fun.

Some people, as I did a number of years ago when I was asked to participate in a survey, fill in the diary each night, whether they watched TV that day or not. I may have gone to a tiddly-winks game or planted banana trees that night, but - to get my vote in for the programs I wanted to see survive - I would check off the programs I would have watched if I had been watching TV.

Unless you are going to waste energy by turning on your TV and



**Bob Spence**  
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then going outside for a game of marbles, you can't take the same liberty with viewer voting when it is done electronically.

The electronic method produces much faster results - preliminary tallies for prime-time shows are available within 36 hours while actual counts from the diary method take about four weeks, says Suchard.

Thus, the not-totally-truthful diaries may ultimately go the way of the dodo bird.

CBC Radio is offering a selection of songs by people who tried to capitalize on the success of others.

Under The Covers, a new series, looks at the best, the worst and the

strangest "covers," - versions of hit songs that other performers subsequently churned out.

There's William Shatner singing Mr. Tambourine Man, a reggae version of John Denver's Take Me Home Country Roads and Sid Vicious singing My Way.

The five programs in the series (on consecutive Sundays at 3 p.m. ET) offer a mix of music and music comedy. Toronto singer Danny Marks is the host.

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