



FILM: **THE IRISHMAN**

FDG RATING: 3.1

Film Discussion Group (FDG) Scale is 1-5 (5 is best)

Martin Scorsese: *director/writer*  
Robert DiNiro: *actor, Frank Sheeran*  
Al Pacino: *actor, Jimmy Hoffa*  
Joe Pesci: *actor, Russell Bufalino*

DATE: January 19, 2020

DISCUSSION SUMMARY: **THE IRISHMAN**

Robert DiNiro called it “a gathering of the tribe”, as Martin Scorsese cast him as the Irishman, Frank Sheeran; Al Pacino as Jimmy Hoffa, Joe Pesci as Russell Bufalino, Harvey Keitel as Angelo Bruno, and other iconic actors in his mobster gang film *The Irishman*. We are introduced to each member in this slow paced, 3hr 30 minute crime drama as footnotes flash momentarily saying how and when each member died, (not by natural causes.) We watch several decades (1949 – 2000) of mobster murders, fierce loyalties, catastrophic betrayals, corruption, and conspiracy. We learn how Frank came to be a hit man for the Philadelphia mob, a confidant of legendary Teamsters leader Jimmy Hoffa and, ultimately, the guy who put Hoffa down in 1975. (Hoffa’s disappearance is an unsolved mystery). Published reviewers spouted accolades for the film stars and the director. Our discussion participants had mixed opinions.

Yes, it’s an ambitious, comprehensive, realistic, pictorial history lesson about the mob, the Teamsters, and how unquestioned loyalty was expected and rewarded. The acting was exceptional. But some discussion participants thought *The Godfather*, *Good Fellas*, and other mobster films were more captivating. It seemed like Scorsese’s ambitious tribute to the crime mob film genre, and a chance for the iconic stars to gather in an epic acting’ “last hurrah”. The daughter played an interesting role with minimal dialogue and mostly from the sidelines but always suspiciously watching. Almost offering a counterpoint to the scales that were tipped so off kilter.

Some of us thought the makeup used to de-age the lead actors in the early scenes was not convincing. They still looked old. Several thought the story was boring, repetitive, sexist, and way too long. Others liked how the film stitched together the height of the teamsters, the auto industry, and the power of the mobsters. Most of the group managed to watch the entire film though not all at one viewing. Others gave up. *The Irishman* earned a somewhat loyal score of 3.1 on our scale of 1 to 5. (5 is the best)



See you at the movies!

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