



FILM: **THE SENSE OF AN ENDING**

FDG RATING: 3.2 ☺☺☺○○

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

Ritesh Batra: *Director*

(*adapted by Nick Payne from novel by Julian Barnes*)

Jim Broadbent: *Actor, Tony Webster*

Charlotte Rampling: *Actress, Veronica Ford*

Joe Alwyn, Actor, Adrian Finn

DATE: April 23, 2017

DISCUSSION SUMMARY: **THE SENSE OF AN ENDING**

Our emotions influence how we remember events and people. This is the core idea in the film *The Sense of an Ending* as the story jumps back in forth in time revealing pieces of the main character's life that weren't exactly how he perceived them.

Jim Broadbent delivers an outstanding performance as Tony Webster, the divorced, lonely, self-absorbed owner of a tiny camera shop in London where he fixes and sells vintage Leica cameras. It's ironically fitting that with the theme of distorted memories, Tony is obsessed with the meticulously engineered lenses of these specific cameras that can capture moments in time so accurately. (Also, we see in a flash back to his youth, his college sweetheart Veronica Ford, gives him his first camera.) Just as a camera documents memories, it is the surfacing of a diary that catapults the plot into motion. Tony receives a certified letter notifying him of the death of Sarah Ford, the mother of his college sweetheart, Veronica. Sarah has unexpectedly bequeathed to him the diary of his best boyhood friend, but Veronica, whom he hasn't seen in more than 50 years, has refused to surrender it. Through flash backs to his 1960s youth, we see Tony relive the painful memories about a tragedy in that he has never come to terms with and we meet his best friend, Adrian Finn, a brooding, philosophizing student who turned Tony and Veronica's relationship into a triangle and soon after committed suicide. As the memories flood his mind, Tony is resolved to retrieve Adrian's diary and revisit the puzzle pieces of his life

Distorted perceptions, tainted memories, we each see things through our personal filtered lens. How well do we really know the people we are even closest to? In class, Adrian recites a line from his thesis: "History is that certainty produced at the point where the imperfections of memory meet the inadequacies of documentation." Tony's flashbacks to his school days are distorted not only by time, but by a deliberate rewrite as he tries to live with himself after what happened to his good friend. As the story moves forward, shocking secrets are revealed that expose the false reality Tony has believed all these years.

Charlotte Rampling, as the illusive older Veronica, only appears toward the end of the film but her performance is extremely absorbing as the twisted last puzzle pieces are put in place.

For several of our resident film reviewers, the story was too jumpy, slow, and confusing. Others more comfortable with non-linear story lines, appreciated the film's mixed tone of unpleasantness just below the surface of pleasantries. One commented that the film was "wonderfully unsensational". We agreed that the cinematography of England was delightful and the college scenes were spot on. Those who read the book said things are explained better in the book and recognized the challenge of compressing this story into a movie.

We ended up with a sensible 3.2 rating for *Sense of an Ending* on a scale of 1 to 5. (5 is the best.)



See you at the movies!

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[Film Discussion Group](#) (FDG) organizer