

Infamous

USA 2006

118 mins

Credits

Director Douglas McGrath
 Screenplay Douglas McGrath
 Cinematography Bruno Delbonnel

Cast

Truman Capote **Toby Jones**
 Harper Lee **Sandra Bullock**
 Perry Smith **Daniel Craig**
 Slim Keith **Hope Davis**
 Kitty Dean **Gwyneth Paltrow**
 Marcella Agnelli **Isabella Rossellini**
 Babe Paley **Sigourney Weaver**
 Diana Vreeland **Juliet Stevenson**
 Cerf Bennett **Peter Bogdanovich**
 Alvin Dewey **Jeff Daniels**

Synopsis

Based on true events, *Infamous* begins in Manhattan, 1959. Successful writer and New York socialite becomes strangely fascinated by the gruesome murder of the Clutter family of Holcomb, Kansas. Leaving his glittery, gossipy Manhattan life behind, he ventures to Kansas with his down-to-earth childhood friend, fellow writer Nelle Harper Lee. Despite initial hostility Capote soon befriends the townspeople, particularly chief detective Alvin Dewey. The killers are eventually caught; they are Dick Hickock and Perry Smith. With his sensitive manner and artistic aspirations, Smith deeply intrigues Capote. The writer embarks on a ground-breaking literary work: a non-fiction book about the murders, written in the style of a novel.

adapted from Sight & Sound Feb'07



Reviews

Douglas McGrath's entertaining *Infamous* goes over much the same ground as Bennett Miller's *Capote* - the research and writing of the non-fiction novel *In Cold Blood*. And Toby Jones's impersonation of Truman Capote is as uncannily accurate as Philip Seymour Hoffman's and even more camp. It has less on the New York literary life and more about café society and the famous Manhattan fag hags who doted on Capote.

Miller's picture is better on prim Middle American Kansas in the dying months of the Eisenhower era and, as Capote's confidante and conscience, Catherine Keener's Harper Lee just has it over Sandra Bullock's.

The major plus, however, of *Infamous* is the intensity of the scenes between Capote and the disturbed bisexual killer Perry Smith. He's played by Daniel Craig in a manner that recalls his scenes with Derek Jacobi in *Love is the Devil*, John Maybury's movie about the criminal George Dyer and Francis Bacon.

Philip French The Observer, January 2007

Biographers are always discovering that someone else is working on the same subject, but biopics have surely never had such a spectacular double-up.

Just a couple of years after Philip Seymour Hoffman's award-winning impersonation of Truman Capote comes this second film on the writer, written and directed by Douglas McGrath, covering the same period, with very similar moments. The smart metropolitan gadfly leaves behind New York's brittle social scene and journeys out to Kansas to create his exploitative masterpiece *In Cold Blood*, the sensational literary investigation of a horrific slaying

British actor Toby Jones plays Capote and certainly looks the part - more so than Hoffman. It's a very good performance and Jones deserves his time in the spotlight. The same goes for Daniel Craig, playing the captured killer Perry Smith, befriended by Capote in prison.

There is a more directly imagined romance between the two men in this movie, which spells out far more emphatically Capote's unreliability and outright lying. Unlike the Hoffman film, it stays off Capote's reputation in the New York literary world, and does not dramatise the envy of his friend Harper Lee's success - and Sandra Bullock is a much less interesting Lee than Catherine Keener was. A good film, though.

Peter Bradshaw The Guardian January 2007