

Ted K [2021]: Film Review

J.D.DeVore

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I was rather sceptical about Ted K when it was announced a few years ago, but a few trustworthy people said some rather positive things about it, so I decided to check it out. I was presently surprised and I'd recommend it to anyone interested in Ted Kaczynski.

The film portrayed Kaczynski accurately and is heavily based on his journals. It follows his primitive life in rural Montana, the anger he felt when the peace of the wilderness was disturbed by the ever-expanding technological system, and the campaign of industrial sabotage and bombings he embarked on in response up until his arrest in 1996.

It also shows the various odd jobs he worked to fund his efforts, his experiments with explosives, and the writing of his infamous manifesto. It even gives a few nods to his influences, Jacques Ellul and Joseph Conrad. However, I would have liked it if the film explored Kaczynski's critique of technology a little more.

The movie also covers Kaczynski's personal life, touching upon his turbulent relationship with his family, his trouble with women (including his misogyny), and his sense of loneliness. The latter I found to be too heavily emphasised. One scene shows his cabin rotating while Bobby Vinton's song "Mr. Lonely," plays, which feels rather silly.

The film portrays many questionable aspects of Unabomber lore. It's questionable if he ever attended a meeting of Earth First! The film also depicts the (probably false) sighting of Kaczynski in a post office trying to renew his passport, and I find it unlikely that he broke his own nose with a cinder block to alter his appearance, as some believe.

Actor Sharlto Copley does an excellent job as Kaczynski and imitates his voice perfectly.

The film is incredibly well directed by Tony Stone, featuring many beautiful landscape shots of the Montana forests where Kaczynski lived and the very trails he walked.

The Ted K Archive

A critique of his ideas & actions



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