



**TIME OUT**

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**THE MOVIE BIZ**

**WHEN A MOVIE HITS HOME...  
LITERALLY**

Clint Eastwood probably won't be talking to an empty chair.

But otherwise, all bets are off when it comes to his new movie, "Richard Jewell," opening nationwide Dec. 13 and already considered a front-runner in the Oscar race.

Perhaps not everyone remembers Richard Jewell, but if you lived in Atlanta during the 1996 Olympics or, even more particularly, were part of the media covering the Games, Jewell's name looms large.

In the early morning of July 27, 1996, a pipe bomb exploded mid-concert in Centennial Park, killing two and injuring 111. The hero of the moment, seemingly, was Jewell, a 33-year-old security guard who helped clear the area, thus cutting down on the number of injured and dead.

That didn't last. Around 72 hours after the explosion, the media, led by hometown newspaper The Atlanta Journal-Constitution (with locally-based CNN and the Olympics official carrier, NBC, hot on its heels) reported that Jewell was now "the focus" of the FBI's investigation. He fit the profile (so to speak) of the lone-wolf, attention-seeking perpetrator.

In other words, he placed the bomb so he could discover the bomb and thus become a heroic figure (something like that, with no loss of life, had happened at the L.A. Olympics in 1984).

As it turned out, Jewell was cleared; the bad guy was Eric Robert Rudolph who went on to plant other bombs before being captured. But something essential was taken from Jewell – not

maliciously, but perhaps carelessly.

The guy was kind of a schlub, as they say. And law enforcement was always his nerd dream. But just because he didn't look like a hero didn't mean he couldn't be a hero.

Jewell sued. CNN and NBC settled. The AJC did not. Jewell died, pretty much a broken man, of heart failure at age 44.

So what story does Eastwood plan to tell?

Interestingly, he first became interested in the story in 2014 – most specifically in a 1997 Vanity Fair article. But he backed off and Paul Greengrass ("United 93," "Bloody Sunday," "The Bourne Supremacy") – considered a much more liberal filmmaker than Eastwood – began circling the project. But he dropped out to do another "Bourne" movie.

Next in the director's chair was Ezra Edelman who made the award-winning documentary, "O.J.: Made in America." And at one point, David O. Russell's name was floated.

More importantly, a couple of names surfaced early and never truly went away: Leonardo DiCaprio and Jonah Hill, initially slated to play Jewell and Jewell's lawyer.

The pair has stayed on as producers, but now their roles will be played by Paul Walter Hauser (Jewell) and Sam Rockwell. Others in the cast include Kathy Bates, Olivia Wilde and Jon Hamm.

And back as director? Clint Eastwood.

To Be Continued...

Book Festival at the **Marcus Jewish Community Center** that it has almost become personal. But I'm extremely glad to see some authors whose credits would knock you out, even if you don't immediately know their names: Dan Okrent, Jodi Kantor, Julie Salamon, Shawn Levy, Bob Mankoff and Stephen Silverman. Check the web site.

**GET OUTTA THE HOUSE**

There are so many authors to choose from in this year's 28th Edition of the

