

De Niro movie touts CIA's dark side

By Kam Williams

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Edward Wilson (Matt Damon) was lucky enough to be born with a blue-blooded WASP lineage. As a consequence, he was not only able to follow in his father's footsteps to Yale, but to join Skull and Bones, the college's secret society which has, for generations, served as a breeding ground for captains of industry, presidents and other powerful leaders.

While still in college, Edward was quietly recruited to serve his country overseas, undercover, in order to monitor the rise of the Nazis in the late Thirties.

However, he had mixed emotions about accepting the offer, primarily, because his dad had also been a spy for the government and had ended up committing suicide under mysterious circumstances while his son was just an adolescent.

But due to the not-so-subtle pressure from his fraternity brothers, Edward capitulated. He even dumped the deaf girl (Tammy Blanchard) he was dating to marry Clover (Angelina Jolie), the well-connected daughter of a senator (Keir Dullea), and sister of a fel-



Matt Damon, left, and other superstars weave a treacherous tale of government drama.

low Bonesman (Gabriel Macht).

A week after their ostensibly arranged, if ill-advised wedding, Edward was whisked away from her to Germany to begin a career of espionage and counter-espionage so covert it was virtually impossible to sort the good guys from the bad guys.

Almost never in the U.S., he persevered out of a blind sense of patriotism, despite the fact that the price for that loyalty is a loveless marriage and a resentful son (Eddie Redmayne).

So unfolds the thought-provoking premise established at the outset of "The

Spike Lee to direct James Brown biopic

LOS ANGELES (AP) - The late "Godfather of Soul" James Brown will rise again, on screen.

Spike Lee has signed on to direct a feature film about the singer produced by Brian Grazer and Imagine Entertainment, Paramount Pictures announced days after the singer's death on Christmas.

Good Shepherd," an intricately plotted political pot-boiler that makes the idea of

"It's an authorized biography done with the cooperation of Mr. Brown before his passing," Paramount representative Nancy Kirkpatrick said without further comment.

Lee will rewrite a draft by Jezz and John Henry Butterworth, the trade paper *Daily Variety* reported. The script has been through sev-

eral drafts since Steve Baigelman wrote the original. The movie could be in production by late 2007, the story said.

"Having known him well, and after spending lots of time with him and researching his life, it's somehow not surprising that he died on Christmas Day. He was the ultimate showman, all the

Thus, the question be-

comes whether Ed Sr. will intervene or allow his boy to make the same mistake as his father and grandfather.

"The Good Shepherd" was directed by Robert De Niro who co-stars and has assembled an A-list ensemble to execute Eric Roth's ("Munich") brilliant script. The cast includes Alec Baldwin, John Turturro, Joe Pesci, Billy Crudup and Michael Gambon, though this is mostly a Matt Damon vehicle.

Tautly edited to make nearly three hours pass imperceptibly, this intriguing meditation on the pitfalls of privilege is not to be missed.

Excellent (4 stars). Rated R for sex, expletives, ethnic slurs, violence, and female frontal nudity.

Bradley

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Stahl recalled.

Bradley brought everyone to his apartment and said he wouldn't let them leave until they thrashed it out, she said.

"The reaction to Ed's dying was something I'd never seen," Stahl said. "I've been around here a long time and there was a quality of reaction from the public that was personal in a way I can't explain, and everyone here has [experienced] the same thing. We have all been flooded with e-mails."

Steve Kroft inherits Bradley's slot as the first correspondent whose face is shown during the show's introduction ("I'm Steve Kroft...").

This, after all the years in which he was ridged as the "new guy."

"I think in some ways he symbolizes '60 Minutes' at its best," Fager said. "He is the best reporter in the business and you don't get better in terms of writing and reporting. His stories are always good. He doesn't do clunkers."

Kroft's stories have led the broadcast three times this season, more than any other correspondent. Over the past year, he's investigated human growth hormones, illegal immigration, Iraqi reconstruction and organized crime in a small town in Italy.

None of the correspondents interviewed expressed any problem with doing a few more stories this year; they're often clamoring for airtime, anyway. Fager's ability to spread time around was a particularly delicate issue last season, with Wallace active and Rather joining the cast from the "CBS Evening News."

At the time he became seriously ill, Bradley had left behind no stories that his colleagues will have to pick up on.

Bradley's sense of whimsy, his cackle of a laugh, will be remembered by all who heard it. Like all "60 Minutes" correspondents, he was a generalist who would mix investigations with softer features.

"The thing you reach for at '60 Minutes' is to develop your own voice, to be as much an individual in the true sense of yourself on camera," Stahl said. "Ed was able to show a lot of parts of himself on camera and not block it off."

At "60 Minutes," correspondents hire a handful of individual producers who have a great deal of power, coming up with story ideas and doing much of the reporting. The producer's name is usually on-screen behind a correspondent during an introduction of a report. Rather than be assigned to another correspondent, Bradley's top producer, Michael Radutzky, will lead his own team and produce stories for various correspondents, Fager said.

Bradley's death also robs "60 Minutes" of its only on-screen Black correspondent. He always saw race as secondary to his reporting, but there were interviews with Black personalities that CBS might have landed the story because the celebrities felt comfortable with Bradley, Fager said. Michael Jackson, Michael Jordan and Tiger Woods were among Bradley's profile subjects.

While it's important to have diversity, "I think everyone thinks it would be a mistake to address that issue with someone just for the sake of addressing that," Kroft said.

Quincy Jones

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they had been sent a previously unknown and unaired tape of a 1958 Blakey concert — the only known footage of the drummer's legendary Messengers lineup with trumpeter Lee Morgan, tenor saxophonist Benny Golson and pianist Bobby Timmons filmed just a month after the group recorded the classic hard-bop "Moanin'" album.

The producers have their own favorite visual highlights. One is drummer Sonny Payne's showmanship

as he juggles his sticks while keeping the beat in his solo feature on the Count Basie DVD filmed in Sweden in 1962. The other is Monk's unorthodox keyboard fingering and trancelike dances caught in two 1966 concerts in Norway and Denmark.

"It's one thing to sit and groove to the music ...but when you can see Thelonious Monk play and see the emphasis of how he hit the keyboard, it gives you a whole better appreciation of the artist," said Peck.

The producers hope to release a second series of DVDs in 2007, pending clearances, by such jazz greats as Charles Mingus, John Coltrane, Duke Ellington and Cannonball Adderley.

"I just give them all the props in the world for creating the series because it helps us get a perspective ...about our roots," said Jones. "I tell the youngsters if you know where you're coming from it's going to be easier to get where you're going."

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