



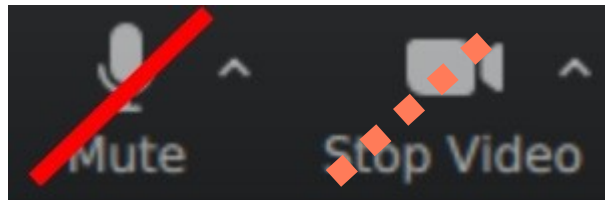
LIFE Movie Club

# Meet John Doe [1941]

Zooming: February 9, 2021

# Technology — Zoom

- There's no charge to join a Zoom meeting
- The free Zoom application can provide a better experience
- Webcam (camera + mic) is required to join the discussion
- It's polite to mute your sound during the movie; if video flickers, try stopping your video



# Contacts

- Terry Poulton — [poultonterry@gmail.com](mailto:poultonterry@gmail.com)
  - Terry *is* the LIFE Movie Club. She found the movies. She told all of us what's coming. But technology is not her thing.
- Bob Fabian — [bob@fabian.ca](mailto:bob@fabian.ca)
  - Bob has watched movies, but he is no movie expert. He is here to help with the technology — where he spent much of his career.
- Reference Material — <http://fabian.ca/LIFEmovies>
  - These slides and all future slides will be posted there, as will reference material that might be interesting to members

# Feature Today



Meet John Doe is a 1941 American comedy-drama film by Frank Capra, starring Gary Cooper and Barbara Stanwyck. The film is about a "grassroots" political campaign created unwittingly by a newspaper columnist with the involvement of a hired homeless man and pursued by the paper's wealthy owner. It became a box-office hit.

John Willoughby [is hired] to play the role of [the fictional] John Doe. Ann starts to pen a series of articles in Doe's name, elaborating on society's disregard for people in need

Wikipedia

# Comment

- As a parting shot, fired reporter Ann Mitchell prints a fake letter from unemployed "John Doe," who threatens suicide in protest of social ills. The paper is forced to rehire Ann and hires John Willoughby to impersonate "Doe." Ann and her bosses cynically milk the story for all it's worth, until the made-up "John Doe" philosophy starts a whole political movement. At last everyone, even Ann, takes her creation seriously...but publisher D.B. Norton has a secret plan.

IMDb

- Should Capra have had John Doe actually commit suicide? There's a suggestion that was his intent, but the studio bosses felt that would make the movie would be too much of a downer.

# Plan for Today

- Introduction - 5 minutes
- Meet John Doe - 135 minutes
- Discussion - 20 minutes
- Open to suggestions for next month
- An actual movie experience in a few months?



The Great Rupert



**The Movie**

# Possible Discussion Points

- The movie fits the model of a socially aware Capra film. Would a similar story line survive in today's media rich environment? Or would it be taken up as gospel and become a blind article of faith?
- Would it have been a better movie if John Doe actually commits suicide?
- The story line is relatively simple. Would we accept a similarly simple story line today? Or, do we demand more realistic complications?



# Final

- Any "final comments"?
- Please send your suggestions to:
  - Terry - [poultonterry@gmail.com](mailto:poultonterry@gmail.com)
  - Bob — [bob@fabian.ca](mailto:bob@fabian.ca)
- Check for postings at <http://fabian.ca/LIFEmovies>
- Enjoy the rest of your virtual afternoon ...