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↳ THE WAY  
WE WERE

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Tony Roman

—  
Bradford introduction  
to 4K Restoration

11th April 2014

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# "THE WAY WE WERE"

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## (1) 'The Way We Were' U.S. Theatrical Trailer

October 24th, 1973, and, frankly, all any audience needed to know: Streisand, Redford, the title. The movie cost Columbia approximately 5 million dollars, and returned over 22 million profit in <sup>immediate</sup> theatrical screenings alone. It received 6 1973 Academy Award nominations, and took home two: Best Music, and Best Song. If there were an Oscar for Best Romance, then that's what it would have won, hands down: a screen romance which, with hindsight, almost rivals those of Scarlett and Rhett, Anna and Camille, Vronsky and Anna Karenina. For sure, they all have one particular resonance in common, as you'll see in a little while....

But "The Way We Were" could have been so much more, so very much more. And the material which would have ensured the film's greatness, not merely its enduring popularity, was actually written, filmed, edited - and deleted.

And fortunately preserved, and not junked, as was the almost inevitable fate of many post-preview dramatic deletions.

lets take a minute to explore the genesis of 'The Way We Were': Film producer Ray Stark was the son-in-law of the great Ziegfeld comedienne Fanny Brice, and determined to tell her story as a musical, first as a show, then as a film. Arthur Laurents was a noted Hollywood screenwriter, with such success as 'The Snake Pit', 'Rope', and 'Summer Madness' behind him, and would write the books for two of Broadway's most fabulous successes - 'West Side Story' and 'Gypsy'.

But Ray Stark had great trouble in finding a suitable Fanny Brice. Arthur Laurents, on the other hand, was directing a Broadway show called 'I Could Get It for You Wholesale', which featured a young Barbra Streisand, who was stopping the show every night with her solo number 'Miss Marmelstein' back then in 1963. And she was seen by producer Billy Rose, who brought her to Ray Stark's attention: the rest was show business history, and the ~~show~~ show was called 'Funny Girl', which was subsequently filmed, bringing Barbra Streisand a

-Shared- Best Actress Academy Award.

Streisand next in touch with writer-director Arthur Laurents, who once told her that she reminded him of a young communist he had known at Cornell, who ~~name~~, amusingly, was Fanny Price, a fiery New Yorker who was a political activist, even though the Young Communist League at Cornell consisted of only 12 members, and what would've happened if that young Jewish girl had fallen for another acquaintance of Arthur's, <sup>cryptically</sup> known only as Tom Blue Eyes ---?

Ray Stark had produced a second success with Barbra Streisand, 1970's "The Owl and the Pussycat" and he was looking for another vehicle that would re-write him with her. In the meantime, Arthur Laurents had written a 50-page treatment which he had called, sensibly and literally, "The Way We Were"; ~~confidently~~ expecting to change the title to a more glamorous, more dramatic one, some day. Stark purchased the screen rights from Laurents and sent the treatment to Streisand.

In the treatment, Arthur Laurents had incorporated much of the bill that he and others

were subjected to ~~in~~ the era of <sup>the U.S.</sup> Government  
'blacklisting' subversives in Hollywood: ostensibly  
to root out communists and their influences, it  
turned into an anti-Semitic witch-hunt to  
root out Jews and liberals from Hollywood and  
also U.S.T.V. (The theatre, in particular Broadway,  
was more difficult to deal with: there was hardly  
anyone in New York who was not a Jew or a  
liberal!)

Barbra Streisand liked the treatment very  
much, and agreed to make the picture, and  
Lauretis was hired to write the script, which was  
to feature the Hollywood blacklist prominently as  
a background to the romance between the young  
blonde, blue-eyed W.A.S.P. and his Jewish left-wing  
Sweetheart.

To direct the film, Stark hired Sydney  
Pollack, in 1971, coming off the success of "They  
Shoot Horses, Don't They?"; a former actor - Pollack  
had worked with Robert Redford in "War Hunt",  
~~and~~ had achieved success directing Redford in  
such films as "This Property is Condemned" and  
"Jeremiah Johnson". Pollack knew there was only  
one choice to play the lead opposite Barbra Streisand -

his old pal Robert Redford.

But Redford had read the treatment and had already turned it down. Pollack then spent the next six months trying to change Redford's mind, which eventually Ray Stark managed to do in virtually one single afternoon: in June 1972 Stark called Pollack and told him that he had exactly one hour to convince Redford, otherwise they would commit to Ryan O'Neal. Redford put his reservations on the table — strengthen Hubbell's character, invest more in the witch-hunt politics of the time, give Hubbell a key point of view — and both Pollack and Stark agreed. Shooting began on September 18th 1972, and was completed on November 29th, 1972.

"The Way we Were" became one of the only 6 features to prominently deal with the Hollywood blacklist — for the record, the others were "The Front", "Guilty by Suspicion", "Fellow Traveller", "The Majestic", and "Good Night, and Good Luck". At least openly — there are also "naming names" cloaked films, notably "On the Waterfront" and "Spartacus", but they are another story.

The blacklist ~~is~~ sequenced in "The Way we Were" moved too strong for preview audiences. Let's hear what ~~the~~ director Sydney Pollack, screenwriter Arthur Laurents, and Barbra Streisand 5 herself have to say. . . .

(2)

Extract

28:16

Start Sc. 199 - Trim

C.V. Kait "In college ...  
incorporating interviews with Sydney  
Pollack and Arthur Laurents plus  
Sc 169 - LHTs

... and I think the picture suffered  
END (N.B. slight unavoi-able  
dialogue overlap with give  
in yellow writing R.to.L).

30:36

Note the American film terms 'Trim' and  
'LHTs' on the out-take surrounds. In  
English, we used the expression deletion -  
and there were many of them between the  
so-called 'final' cut of 'The Way We Were'  
and the actual delivered version which  
went out on release. Normally such deletions  
are junked and not stored, but thanks to  
Barbara Streisand she kept every deletion,  
and they are available ~~in~~ on the  
excellent documentary 'The Way We Were: Looking  
Back' on the original DVD <sup>release</sup> release. So  
what you are about to see is a brilliant  
Fought

(6)

Now 4K copy of the released version of  
"The Way We Were," the one many of you  
will already be familiar with, but I'm  
going to leave you with this thought: Would  
it not have been possible to release this  
fine 2-disc set: the release version and  
the uncut preview version, simply by incorporating  
in straight cuts the deletions rescued by  
Barbra Streisand? Generally, deletions made at  
preview, and additions, are sensible and audience  
-driven, but in this particular case a key  
aspect of the film is missing, and would  
certainly add to the ~~total~~ movie's theft. You've  
seen earlier in the trailer what the distributors  
were selling, and who could blame them — the  
box office ~~was~~ unmoved the wretch.  
another excerpt from the documentary "Looking  
Back," where the film's makers explain their own  
particular points of view: the film isn't at all  
lessened by what you are about to see —  
it's still a very moving, very relevant motion



picture, but perhaps, just perhaps, it could have been a very great one.....

③ Extract

39:42

Start

C.V. Sydney Pollack

"We had two previews in San Francisco ... " (Directly after "in such a black and white way as...")

Including Arthur Laurents: "But the climax is missing ..."

Barbra Streisand: "There weren't many movies where..."

Sydney Pollack: "I feel that....."

... ~~clean~~ <sup>clean</sup> like emotionally to me make the way it is now"

End on B.C.V. Streisand and Redford facial twoshot (before dissolve through to Marvin Hamlisch).

42:16

manage ~~to change~~ ~~the title~~ ~~the title~~ By the way, they never did ~~the title~~. Thank you - ~

①

Tom Stroman