

The Times review

**Catching a Killer** showed the reality of detective work to be, unlike *Lethal Weapon*, slow and painstaking, while also proving that a fly-on-the-wall documentary reflecting this needn't be dull. Anna Hall's film had your critic riveted to the sofa — for its first half at least — as Thames Valley police searched for missing mother of three Natalie Hemming as her husband, Paul, sat in custody, suspiciously unruffled.

Hall's cameras were somehow everywhere: at police meetings and during deskside small talk, which can only be testament to the film-maker's commitment. As with 2015's *The Murder Detectives*, this kind of immediate realism gave you faith in our police and their methods.

That the moments lingering on Natalie's poor family felt a touch voyeuristic was excusable for the film's ultimate point. Paul, it turned out, had been violent towards Natalie in the past. On the night she vanished, their six-year-old heard noises in the next room "like thunder". Paul had beaten Natalie to death.

The film's lasting value was less about police work than as a powerful warning about where domestic violence can end. The message: don't put up with it, even for a minute. [james.jackson@thetimes.co.uk](mailto:james.jackson@thetimes.co.uk)