TV show review: Mr. Bates Vs. The Post Office

⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛ (as a TV show)
⬛⬛⬛⬛⬛ (for the purposes of this blog)

During my year at Code For America, I saw many glimpses of truly bad technology – slow courtroom computers, infuriating interfaces, obsolete specs, and the inevitable layer of remote access GUIs atop it all that made everything worse. As much as I hated some of the consumer apps on my top-of-the-shelf iPhone back then – I saw things that were a lot more harrowing.

This British show from 2024 dramatizes the UK Post Office scandal I just learned about, in four one-hour episodes, and highlights how those kinds of things actually affect most people who aren't tech-savvy.

As a TV show, it's gripping and well done. Toby Jones is marvellous, and Monica Dolan, whom I didn't know of before, is a standout. The many awards wone here are deserved.

Unfortunately, for the purposes of this blog, the show is lacking something: either the other side of the story (what were the systemic or structural problems that allowed this to happen inside The Post Office and Fujitsu?), or the technical details of the bugs (those are barely even mentioned to begin with). The exemplary last episode of *Chernobyl* solved this brilliantly in the courtroom, connecting the human drama with the technological and scientific underpinnings. I missed something like that here.

Still, the core (sorry, pun really not intended) of *Chernobyl* is not about the AZ-5 button or the positive void coefficient, and the Horizon scandal shouldn't be reduced to bugs either. Overall, it's not an easy watch, but worth seeing this to remind ourselves of powerlessness of people against both bad technology and bad systems, the challenges and power of collective action, and how much damage bad software can *really* do.

In America, the show is available on iTunes and on Amazon Prime.

Newer

Older

10th January 2026	9th January 2026
Amiga Pointer Archive	In stereo, where available