

Changing Attitudes Toward War and Women in Twentieth Century Film

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INTRODUCTION

This unit has been written for use in two eleventh grade United States History courses. One course covers the period from 1865 to the present, while the second course, an Advanced Placement program, begins at the period of colonization. This unit will be used over a semester in sections that deal with World Wars I and II, the Korean Conflict, the Vietnam War, and the Gulf War. Most of the curriculum here could also be adapted for ninth grade courses. Each section of the lesson plans is designed for one or two 45-minute periods.

The school in which this will be taught is an urban high school with 2500 students, a significant number of whom are refugees who have had first hand experience with war. Students who are still learning English will find films that use dialects and non-standard English especially challenging.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF UNIT

It is the purpose of this unit to show students that war films do more than tell stories and provide catharses for viewers. Each film also conveys the social values and the *mores* of the period in which it was produced and addresses attitudes not only toward war, but also toward topics closely associated with war, such as the morality of fighting, the causes for which it is moral and just to fight, the definition of heroism and the responsibility of the individual to exhibit ethical behavior. Frequently, the causes worth fighting for are such things as political systems, home and family. This final topic lends itself to an evaluation of the role of the woman in society, both those in traditional roles and those involved more actively in the war effort. The role of the woman in many war films is either peripheral or non-existent and must be inferred by references made by other characters, as in scenes where a soldier writes letters home or receives packages of home made treats. When she does appear on screen, the female is usually in a subservient or supporting role, the purpose of which is to assist or to nurture the main male protagonist. However, when present, women must also cope with the same anxieties and crises as her male counterparts. Everyone, both at home and on active duty, must co-operate, work for the same goals, and show loyalty and perseverance in the war effort. In addition to portraying gender roles, films also incorporate the contemporary views on race, social class and ethnic types, and reflect such conditions as the amount of integration and socialization among races as well as the disparity in economic status.

When films are used in class, there are several areas that should be examined. First, the historical setting should be analyzed by asking how accurately the film depicts

historical events, what is the context of the film and what is the meaning of such phrases as “based on historical events”? Second, apart from entertainment value, why was the film made? Third, the aesthetic aspects of the film and approaches taken by the director should be considered. Such choices as using black and white instead of color, very wide screen, amplified sound, angles of shots, lighting, editing sequence, close-ups and centering action so the film can be trimmed to fit the television screen will affect the viewer’s impression.

An additional problem in evaluating the films should be considered. There is a lag of as much as a decade between the time an attitude toward a particular subject changes and the year in which this change is reflected or incorporated in a Hollywood film. The question is how much does Hollywood follow this change and how much does it influence and hasten further change? For instance, although disenchantment with the military was always present, even in World War II, these negative feelings increased as a result of the Korean War. *The Bridges at Toko-Ri* (1955), whose protagonist is a member of an activated Reserve unit, appeared comparatively soon, only five years after the 1950 North Korean invasion of South Korea and the subsequent very unpopular activation of United States National Guard Reserve units. Other examples in films with World War II themes include more sympathetic treatment of German and Japanese characters in the movies made after the late 1940s. The film industry is a profit making enterprise and is influenced by both domestic and foreign attitudes. If a film is too much in advance of American attitudes, it will antagonize the audience and profits will be less. During and after World War II, as former foreign markets were reopened to American films, an international audience had to be considered. The points had to be made that not all of the former enemy were evil, that some were misguided in fighting, and that others had been against the war. This approach made the former enemy more human and contributed to more sympathetic and understanding attitudes among the American public.

Although Americans have historically been unwilling to enter war, once the step to active and official participation has been taken, the country has rallied to support either the cause or the troops, and usually both. Isolationism and pacifism combined to delay American entry into both World Wars I and II. However, after each declaration of war, the country, for the most part, enthusiastically supported the mobilization of manpower and industry. Conversely, the undeclared wars of the second half of the century caused more mixed reactions. Because of the Cold War, the participation of the United States in the Korean Conflict was presented as a police action of the United Nations, an initially acceptable intervention taken to oppose the invasion of a pro-Western country by a Communist nation. Even the war in Vietnam was at first supported by the American public because the engagement there, as it had been in Korea, was seen as a necessary move against the threat of a monolithic Communist domination of the world.

As the 1960s progressed, there was a gradual turning against the American involvement and continued presence in Southeast Asia. The Civil Rights movement, the realization that Communism might not be a monolith, the growing perception that the

government was not acting honestly or candidly in its communications, and the increased use of the draft to augment the military were all factors in awakening a more general disillusion with the war in Asia. The ability of television to present color pictures of the Vietnam war within 24 hours of the events brought the war and its inhumanities, such as defoliation and burning with napalm, into sharp focus. As a result many people were torn between a sense of responsibility and loyalty toward the United States and a belief that one had a duty to return the country to a more moral position.

In some cases these changes were accelerated by the fact that, beginning with the Korean War, the armed forces were integrated in all combat units. The number of casualties in the infantry that were being taken by African-Americans in Vietnam was perceived as being disproportionately greater than the percentage of African-Americans in the population as a whole, a claim that was emphasized by Martin Luther King, Jr. in his 1967 Riverside Church Speech. (1) Therefore, the period of the late 1960s was a turning point in attitudes toward the military and toward the role of government. These changes are reflected in the images that are presented and the values that are projected in Hollywood films such as *Apocalypse Now* (1979) and *Gardens of Stone* (1987).

The next big change in American attitudes towards war comes with the 1991 Gulf War. Government officials had learned from the debacle of Vietnam that American public opinion must be behind any war and that the war should not be started unless it could be won. A massive public relations and publicity campaign molded opinion and a huge military build up guaranteed success. The resulting victory served as an antidote for the defeatism of Vietnam and helped to create an atmosphere in which films showing “good wars” and struggles against unjust rulers might be expected to be box office draws. *Braveheart* (1995) and *Gladiator* (2000) were blockbuster financial successes about heroes who show fortitude and bravery in non-American wars. By the end of the decade, films that show that war is sometimes justified, such as *The Patriot* (2000), were again released in large numbers. A driving force behind this increase was the box office success of *Saving Private Ryan* (1998). Continuing into the new century, seven new films have been or are scheduled for release in 2001: *Enemy at the Gates*, *Pearl Harbor*, *The Windtalkers*, *The Buffalo Soldiers*, *Captain Corelli’s Mandolin*, *Behind Enemy Lines* and *We Were Soldiers*; on the drawing boards are ancient history epics *Alexander the Great* and *Gates of Fire*.

Ideally, in this unit, three or four films from each of the twentieth century wars should be examined: one or two that were made at the time of the war, one that was made at a later time and a third film, made at the time of the war but dealing with a different subject. Space constraints require selections to be made and the choices reflect my best judgment about the usefulness and availability of the films.

TOPICS AND METHOD

The films are compared in chronological order by war according to a key set of topics explored in this section: the view of the justness of the war, the depiction of the enemy, the willingness of the participants to fight, the reasons people give for fighting, the treatment of different races, the status of women, and the use of various types of weapons which might reflect the rules of war. None of the films really glorifies war, even those made in World War II. To simplify matters, the word *war* is used for all conflicts, whether or not Congress actually declared war. It should be carefully noted that many of the films on the list, because of the inclusion of graphic violence, language or sex, have a rating that will preclude their being shown in school in their entirety. Selections will be given that are acceptable for use in class. However, anyone who uses this unit should preview the suggested film and make sure each is appropriate for the grade level and fits the guidelines of the school and district.

1. Justice and the Causes of Wars

William McKinley's Secretary of State, John Hay, referred to the Spanish American War as a "splendid little war." And so it was. It was a legally declared war and was fought for a good cause, the liberation of the Cuban people from a repressive regime. It had popular support in the United States, achieved its objectives in a short time and, if the ground war in the Philippines is excluded, produced relatively few casualties. No American war before or since has been so successful.

One of the first discussions of the justice of war is found in St. Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologica* (thirteenth century). Aquinas was born near Naples and, after early training in the Church fathers at the Benedictine monastery at Monte Cassino, attended the University of Naples where he was exposed to scholarship and ideas emanating from recently translated Arabic and Greek texts. Aquinas' great work was probably written for members of religious orders who would use it as an aid in preaching. Many topics concerning right conduct for Christians are included, among them definitions of just war. If we apply his criteria for determining whether a war is "good" or justified, (*i.e.*, declared by an appropriate authority, fought for a just cause and undertaken to avoid an evil or to reach a good end) only World Wars I and II clearly fit the description. Even the latter part of the Spanish American war is questionable because many considered the United States' conquest of the Philippines to be an example of imperialism. The wars of the second half of the century were entered without formal declarations of war, as required by the Constitution. Even the people most supportive of these last wars would agree that the reasons for American involvement were nowhere nearly as compelling as the reasons that involved this country in the earlier conflicts. The legitimacy and appropriateness of American motives can be explored by viewing several films and reading some selections that discuss the morality of war. (2)

2. The Nature and Responsibility of the Soldier

Another facet to be examined is the character of the soldier. Is he a volunteer, a draftee or a professional military man? The first two types are similar to the Roman general Cincinnatus, who served Rome in time of danger, but then returned to private life after the emergency had passed. This citizen soldier can be shown as having to overcome deep aversions to killing and having frequent thoughts of returning to civilian life. He may have various non-monetary reasons to fight: patriotism, love of family, loyalty to comrades and sometimes even moral responsibility to support ideals. Perhaps he questions whether it is necessary to fight. Sometimes moral decisions must be made about adhering to the rules of war. In general, problems with obeying the rules of war are more apparent in the post Vietnam films, as are questions about the morality or justness of the cause.

The contrast between the draftee and the professional military man can be seen in many films, and is often a cause of dramatic conflict, because the professional military man is the drill sergeant or the general whose apparently arbitrary orders seem pointless to the new recruit. Sometimes these figures display a love of war and seem to be unable to function without it. On the other hand, the recent recruit questions either the need to fight or his own ability to kill in combat.

All soldiers are required to observe the rules of war, a duty that entails making quick decisions under extremely stressful conditions. What is the responsibility of the soldier in providing security for civilians or in extending protection to captives? How might the very negative attitude toward the enemy, seeing him as a sub-human species, be a catalyst for immoral actions? In addition to events such as the My Lai massacre, the 2001 discussion of the mission of former Senator Bob Kerrey's Navy SEAL detachment raised questions about the legality, morality and justness of the actions taken. Other moral dilemmas arise when a soldier must oppose an unjust order, when loyalty to the group might cause a choice between honorable or dishonorable behavior or when a choice must be made about the amount of force necessary to achieve an objective. (3)

3. View of the Enemy

All films will include references to the enemy. Frequently the references will stress the difference between the two sides. If the film is made exclusively from the viewpoint of "us", the enemy then is seen as a different type, a "them". Racial epithets and derogatory comparisons are used; for example, "monkey" and "baboon" turn up as descriptions of Japanese in World War II era films. This distancing of the enemy is perhaps a psychological necessity because it makes it easier for the combatant to think in terms of killing and not murdering, a point made in *The Big Red One* (1980).

Depending on the decade, the enemy might be pictured as vicious, inhuman, inept, determined or very skillful. Sometimes there will be a mixture of stereotypical attributes.

Occasionally the descriptions will cross over into use in non-fiction. In *Bataan*, for example, there is a speech in which the U.S. soldiers are told that the Japanese soldier can live for a week on the daily U.S. ration. In the PBS documentary *The Search for Pancho Villa* (1993), the Chihuahuan rancher Rey Whetten says that Villa's men could live for a week on three or four kilos of parched corn, whereas Pershing's soldiers had to have plenty of provisions.

The attitude toward the enemy varies by decades because of contemporary values or uses. For instance, in the 1970s the United States needed Japan as an ally, so *Tora! Tora! Tora!* (1970) presents a more sympathetic view of the Japanese foreign office. *The Longest Day* (1962) has both good Germans (those who oppose Hitler) and Nazis. The use of the slang contraction "Nazi" instead of "German" is a usage that appears in films and has been adopted by most current U.S. history books. Again, the change came as a result of the need of West Germany as an ally in the Cold War.

4. The Role of Women

In combat films made during World War II, women rarely appear. Except on the eastern front in Europe, women in combat conditions were mainly nurses, so their roles and films are limited; the main combat films featuring women are *So Proudly We Hail* (1943) and *Cry Havoc* (1943). Women in other roles appear infrequently in films, because it was felt that portraying women in the war zone would cause women at home to feel threatened. In the films made in the late 1940s and after, women were included as part of the story line usually in terms of romantic interest. *From Here To Eternity* (1953), *The Bridges at Toko-Ri* and *Gardens of Stone* are examples. Occasionally, women appear as seducers, as in the Playboy models who entertain the troops in *Apocalypse Now*. Earlier films might have this role represented by pin-up pictures or by suggestive names on planes or tanks.

The women seen in films of the early 1940s tend to keep the traditional roles of the supporting helper, the nurturer of family, the adoring spouse or girlfriend, and the maintainer of the *status quo* at home. Sometimes women work, but only because this will bring the fighting men home sooner. These motifs were also used in posters in the 1940s and were constantly emphasized by government publications. (4) The women most frequently alluded to are the wives or mothers who send letters or are the recipients of letters. In both entertainment and propaganda films women are seen as the symbols of the values for which the war is being fought, as representations of stability, the home and family values. Propaganda films also use the symbol of the working woman, such as Rosie the Riveter, helping to build planes and tanks, products that will help end the war quickly and bring home the men whose arrival will obviate the need for female workers in the factories.

Crimes against women, such as rape and forced labor, are shown in later post-war films, and in the case of rape, are more likely to be subjects of foreign films as in *Due*

Femine (*Two Women*, 1962). Forced prostitution is alluded to in *So Proudly We Hail* (1943) and attempted rape is shown in *Three Come Home* (1950).

5. Censorship, Morals and Propaganda

In World War II, the Office of War Information and the Bureau of Movie Productions kept close watch on the films produced by Hollywood. Films were supposed to be supportive of the war effort and not to depict unsavory aspects of American life. They had to present Americans as unified across racial and economic class lines in their desire to increase production and to decrease waste. Scripts were usually examined before production started to ensure there would be no inappropriate references to allies or comments that might reflect negatively on the American War effort.

The governmental supervision ensured that the Allies and United States military were treated with respect in films and shown to have few faults. This watchfulness encouraged the production of films that featured various branches of the services, such as Seabees and submariners, as well as the popular fighter pilots. Plot lines told stories about all the allies, and not mainly the British, as had been the case before the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Many directors and writers were in the army, and used their skills to produce films that assisted the war effort. Most important among these is the *Why We Fight* series which was directed by Frank Capra. This series was made for army inductees; later each film had a commercial release. John Ford, the director of *December 7th* (1943), had two versions of his original 82-minute film. Because his portrayal of an unprepared United States was seen as unpatriotic, he released a 34-minute version in which the offending scenes were removed.

6. War Movies and the Historical Context

Historical context has two interpretations. First, there is the setting: the historical context of the events referred to in the film must be explained. Distinctions should be drawn between films that are based on a historical event, films that claim to present a faithful account of an event, and films that use a historical event as the background for other stories. For example, *Tora! Tora! Tora!* is a film that tries to present a faithful account of Pearl harbor, whereas *From Here to Eternity* had Pearl Harbor as a background for other stories. Second, each film must be viewed taking into consideration the time at which it was *made*. This historical context of a film's production and release will affect the attitude shown toward former enemies, minority characters, women, and the military.

For instance, in *A Midnight Clear* (1992), a film set at the time of the Battle of the Bulge, one soldier remembers his mother stopping in to see that he is sleeping, after she has returned from her job as a hospital intern. A 1944 style mother would be returning from war work, or more likely, from the kitchen where she had been industriously canning the vegetables she had grown in her victory garden. 1990s films expect iconic

1990s mothers. This film, released after the fall of the Berlin Wall, also shows Germans who are worn out and tired of war, a condition that was closer to that of 1990 East Germans rather than that of the Wehrmacht in 1944. The mixing of historic events and eras is shown in the main event of the film, a truce between the Germans and the Americans, an event that is closer in fact to the 1914 Christmas truce in France between the British and the Germans.

THE FILMS

World War I, Selected Films:

Sergeant York (1941), *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1930, 1979), *Yankee Doodle Dandy* (1942).

The dates of issue of these films illustrate the need to put films in their historical context. They are World War II era films. *Sergeant York* (1941) was released before the United States entered the war, at a time when it was increasingly obvious that American involvement was imminent and there was, consequently, a need to recall the heroes of an earlier time. Similarly, *Yankee Doodle Dandy* (1942) revived the patriotic songs of World War I.

Sergeant York, starring Gary Cooper, illustrates the opposition to war by a pacifist soldier who changes his mind and becomes a Medal of Honor recipient. The process of York's change from pacifism to belligerence is parallel to the change that occurred in the American public from 1940 to late 1941. Franklin D. Roosevelt had run for his third term in 1940 on a program that promised that American boys would not fight in European wars. This promise was popular with isolationists and relatives of those likely to be drafted. In the story York had not wanted to fight and kill, but had changed his mind after considering the lessons of history. He distinguished himself in France where he had killed and captured many Germans. Later York explained that there were machine guns shooting at soldiers and that he had to stop it. York's commanding officer summed up the change by saying York killed in order to stop more killing.

There are several advantages in using this movie. There is an opportunity to examine the role of York's eventual wife, who is an example of the supportive, adoring, church-going woman. Methods of training soldiers can also be studied. A pre-induction scene in which York shows his sharp-shooting ability could be compared with a similar scene in *Glory* (1989). The trench warfare scenes are good and convey the senseless slaughter of the frontal attack. The poverty in York's area could be compared to the experience of Americans who were recovering from the effects of the Great Depression.

Yankee Doodle Dandy is recommended for the songs *It's a Grand Old Flag*, *Over There* and the title song which includes *Born on the Fourth of July*, a line that will be used as the title for a later Vietnam war film. These song production numbers of the film are real flag-wavers that show the enthusiasm for the earlier war, extend the emotion to

the later war and create classic film images of patriotism. For classroom use only the musical production numbers would need to be screened.

The extent of integration in the armed forces can be seen in the films studied. In World War I films, there is no integration. African-American troops were in segregated units with white commissioned officers. In World War II, the units were still segregated, but there were African-American officers. All branches of the military were integrated after Harry Truman's 1948 executive order. The service of black regiments in France in World War I made the returning soldiers even more eager for equal treatment and opportunities in the United States because they had experienced a lack of prejudice in France. Therefore they were more receptive to the NAACP program of 1919 and the arguments presented in W.E.B. DuBois' "A Call for Democracy After the War" from the May 1919 *Crisis*.

An alternative film to consider might be *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1930, 1979) which is based on Erich Maria Remarque's 1929 novel. It sends a strong anti-war message, a feeling that was shared by most of those who had undergone the dehumanizing battles of the trenches. The date of the earlier Academy Award winner reflects the isolationist and pacifist attitude of the 1930s and the latter film is consonant with post Vietnam war attitudes.

World War II, Selected Films:

Battle of Britain (1942), *December 7th* (1943), and *The Home Front* (1944); *Wake Island* (1942) and *Bataan* (1943); *The North Star* (1943) and *Enemy at the Gates* (2001); *The Longest Day* (1962) and *Saving Private Ryan* (1998); *Tora! Tora! Tora!* (1970) and *Pearl Harbor* (2001); *Patton* (1970) and *The Big Red One* (1980); *Saboteur* (1942), *Mrs. Miniver* (1942), and *The General Died at Dawn* (1936); *So Proudly We Hail* (1943) and *Three Came Home* (1950); *The Story of G. I. Joe* (1945) and *Anzio* (1968).

Because World War II was a "good" war, fought in two military theaters and on many fronts, it provides an unlimited supply of story lines and locales for films to exploit. Battle stories, inspirational sacrifices, brave women, supportive women, indomitable Russians, noble Englishmen, inflexible Germans, the courageous multi-ethnic platoons, sea chases, air battles over Europe, tank duels in the desert, attacks on Tokyo, submarine stories, sabotage, all these and many more can be found. The huge number of films with World War II subjects is overwhelming and offers the history teacher many options.

For my unit, I recommend the first five films that are listed above. First, I would show *December 7th* and *The Battle of Britain*. The latter film, along with *The Home Front* were released by the Office of War Information and were part of the *Why We Fight* series. These films were to be used in training camps to educate recruits about the reasons for war. At the time there was a reluctance to put them in civilian theaters because the running time, about an hour, was too long for a short subject and too short for a feature length film. (5)

What is important about *December 7th* is that it provided images that have been re-used in many other Pearl Harbor films. For example, there is a scene at a Sunday Mass which is disrupted by news of the attack and shows people moving in choreographed crowds in various directions when the planes come. This scene is repeated in *Tora! Tora! Tora!* and is recalled in *From Here to Eternity*, in the movement of people across a courtyard seen from above. Another scene aboard a battleship which shows a black sailor firing a deck gun at the attacking planes has been repeated in *Tora! Tora! Tora!* and has been prominent both in the trailers for *Pearl Harbor* and in the film itself. The close-up shot of the sailor looking to the sky together with the angle at which the shot is taken gives the gunner a larger than life, heroic image. A third situation featuring an unattended radar station occurs in *From Here to Eternity* and in *Tora! Tora! Tora!*. The unsuspecting, naïve Americans are depicted as innocents going about their daily tasks such as playing baseball (*Pearl Harbor*), unaware of the menace from the East. Other films in this series also repeat action in ways that have become visual cliches. In *The Battle of Britain*, there is a scene where people get off a bus, keep their heads down and are barely missed by machine gun fire that perforates the bus in a straight line, just above their heads. This trope, first used in *December 7th*, is repeated in *Wake Island*.

The *Why We Fight Series* also provides stereotypical views of women. The Office for War Information had issued guidelines for campaigns to get women to work. (6) The suggestions were incorporated in the presentations of women in feature films. Women who didn't work were typically shown as slackers; women must be addressed with appeals to emotions; working will fill the women's time until the men come home. Government posters of the period can also be used to illustrate this theme.

Two other 1942 films, *Wake Island* and *Bataan*, were the first to show World War II battles. *Wake Island* was captured shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor and was one of the easternmost Pacific islands under Japanese control. The battles of Corregidor and the Bataan peninsula and the ensuing infamous Death March were also crippling defeats for Allied troops. The problem for each film was to portray the morale-deflating loss as a noble and heroic sacrifice that would further the war effort. In *Wake Island* the solution was to stress that the delaying action bought time for the Allies' eventual victory, an outlook which in 1942 was very optimistic. In *Bataan*, perhaps the archetype of the combat genre, a multi-ethnic group composed of people from the engineering corps, Marines, Navy and Navy Air Corps, is gradually eliminated; the death of the last member is not shown. The use of an integrated group in *Bataan* is an interesting approach because at the time the film was produced, all military units were segregated, a point worth discussing with students.

In each of these films, the role of women is peripheral. *Wake Island* starts with a scene of an officer with his wife and daughter at Pearl Harbor. The officer is transferred to Wake Island and hears that his wife was killed in the attack. This is typical of a traditional woman's roles in war films: being a martyr, and thereby providing the reason

for fighting. In *Bataan* nurses are shown in combat positions and then as evacuees. One nurse has the other typical role, as wife of the fighter. A woman who does not actually appear, but who stands in for numbers of American women, is the mother to whom a letter is being written. Her invisible presence is invoked as a personal reason for fighting, the protection of loved ones, and also as the person who will hear why it is necessary to fight to preserve the American way of life.

The reasons for fighting advanced in the *Why We Fight* series can be found once again in these feature films. There is an emphasis on the war as being a “people’s war”, a phrase that is heard in many films. Referring to “the people” means that all Americans can be urged to contribute to the general war effort both in required activities, such as rationing, and in voluntary efforts, such as recycling metal cans and buying war bonds. The latter activity is doubly advantageous: it removes excess cash, lessening the pressure for inflation, and it is economically advantageous for the buyer. The duty of women is to take the place of the man in factories, to give up luxuries, and to be supportive.

Films set in the Pacific and in the western European Theater show women in mainly supportive secondary roles: nurses, secretaries and Wren officers who, under the supervision of male superiors, do little more than move the position markers for troops on large maps. There are a few exceptions to this, such as the women in *Back to Bataan* (1945) who become guerrilla fighters. However, the situation is different on the Eastern European front where women were on the front lines fighting. This difference is illustrated by two films made almost sixty years apart, *North Star* (1943) and *Enemy at the Gates* (2001).

These two Eastern front films demonstrate the contrast in the way Communism is treated, a difference that reflects the historical context of their production. In the earlier film the only reference to a political system is the use of “Comrade” and passing references to commissars. In the 1940s there were two reasons for this. First, some writers in Hollywood wanted to downplay any sense that the film was pro-Communist propaganda. (7) In the 1940s the film industry could be pro-Russian, but not pro-Communist. Therefore, the Russians could be depicted as fighting for family and Mother Russia, but not for the Russian way of life. With the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1990, Communism was no longer a threat. It became possible to be friends with the Russians, to praise the valor of the Russian soldier and at the same time to show how the inefficient Soviet system failed in the supplying of Stalingrad. In keeping with the feeling that the United States won the Cold War, the shortcomings and the barbarity of the Communist system could be gloated over in a way that was impossible in the 1940s.

So Proudly We Hail has as its focus the nurses who were present at the battles of Bataan and Corregidor. The movie combines many of the conventions associated with the film battle genre and the stereotypical roles associated with the World War II era woman. This is one of the relatively few films that have female protagonists.

Patton, the story of the latter part of the career of George Patton (George C. Scott), the Third Army tank commander, attempts to explain this controversial general. In earlier pictures, generals never had to be “explained”; they either won or lost. In the film Patton says things such as “Americans never lose. Losing is shameful.” This is an interesting statement because *Patton* was made two years after the Tet offensive in Vietnam at a time when it was becoming apparent that the United States was not winning the war. This film and other World War II stories made in the 1960s and 1970s, such as *Anzio*, show a much less idealized military establishment and in spirit are closer to Vietnam War films.

Later Wars, Selected Films:

Korea: *The Bridges at Toko-Ri* (1955). Vietnam: *The Green Berets* (1968), *Apocalypse Now* (1979), *Born on the Fourth of July* (1989), and *Gardens of Stone* (1987); Gulf War: *Courage Under Fire* (1996)

The legally undeclared wars in Korea, Vietnam and the Persian Gulf result in a change in atmosphere and focus in the war films of the late 1960s to the present. With a few exceptions, there is a complete lack of explanations of why the soldiers are there. Instead, the focus is frequently on the mismanagement, confusion and logistical fog of the military establishment, conditions which cause unnecessary suffering for the soldiers and the civilian population. The higher-ranking officers are shown to lack connection with reality and to make arbitrary decisions that make life unreasonably hard for the average soldier. This depiction is different from that of the earlier war films’ officers who were strict disciplinarians who wanted to be hard on the troops in order to prepare them for battle. In these later films an officer who is out of touch with reality is not presented in the same light, bemused manner of the earlier films. Earlier films, perhaps reflecting social class, contrast the officer who lacks common sense with the enlisted man who has street smarts. An example of this contrast occurs in *December 7th* when the surprise of the attack is blamed on an inexperienced lieutenant who didn’t listen to the warnings of the private who was watching the radar and who knew that the activity on the radar was unusual.

The Bridges at Toko-Ri, a beautifully photographed film, shares common ground with both World War II and Vietnam War films. Like the earlier war, there is a commanding officer who is concerned about his men, but this film also raises questions about both the reasons the United States is fighting and about the fairness of calling to active duty people who have fought in World War II. These activated reservists are navy pilots whose mission is to bomb bridges in North Korea. An additional advantage in using this film is that, because it includes a scene with a Japanese family, the changed attitude toward Japanese is made clear.

Two years before *Patton*, John Wayne had starred in *The Green Berets* (1968), a film whose purpose seems to have been to support absolutely the need to fight in Vietnam. In this, it is a typical John Wayne movie. He is the tough, but good, officer who is fighting the good fight and convinces skeptical reporters of the necessity of fighting the war. This

particular film is almost straight propaganda: good Vietnamese generals are shown; charges are made that the Russian, Czech and Chinese Communist governments are supplying the Viet Cong with weapons; the enemy kills non-belligerent civilians, such as teachers and professors; the claim is made at the end that the war is being fought for the children, "You are what this is all about," John Wayne says to the hero-worshipping boy. *The Green Berets* appears to be the only film set in Vietnam that is in favor of the Vietnam War. The other movies that are cited in this unit all question the war.

Gardens of Stone, *Born on the Fourth of July* and *Apocalypse Now* are strong anti-Vietnam War films. The first of these is the easiest to understand and is a good choice for most students. It addresses the concerns that professional military people had over the war and presents professional soldiers in a sympathetic light. The protagonist, a recent high school graduate, is a character with whom students can easily identify. He is eager to become a soldier and to prove himself by serving in Vietnam. *Born on the Fourth of July*, based on a true story, shows the protagonist's change from a hawk to a dove, his conflict with his hawkish parents, and the problems associated with his severe wounds. *Apocalypse Now*, also a beautiful film, shows the chaos of the military, the disintegration of discipline, and the cruelty shown to civilians. Because of allusions to Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, it is more appropriate for advanced students.

There is a change in the way the enemy is depicted in these films, related to American opinions regarding the legitimacy of the war or the legality of the means used to wage it. Starting with the Korean war, there was growing doubt about whether it was worthwhile for Americans to be involved in a war in a part of the world where we seemed to have no compelling national interest. Also, with the onset of new wars, it was necessary to come to terms with our former enemies. As the Soviet Union became more threatening, we became friendlier with Germany. In Asia, the increase in power of China drove us toward our former enemy, Japan. *The Longest Day*, with its picture of good Germans, and *Tora! Tora! Tora!* with the sympathetic picture of Admiral Yamamoto, were Hollywood's way of signalling that peace had come. The growth of cynicism and distrust in national institutions caused by Vietnam has led to films that distrust the military and question the legitimacy of United States involvement in a war (*Born on the Fourth of July*), that show the chaos and capriciousness of war (*Enemy at the Gates*), films that show soldiers violating the rules of war in the killing prisoners (*Saving Private Ryan*), and civilians (*Apocalypse Now*).

It is not until the Gulf War that women in United States forces were presented in films as having a more active presence in war zones. *Courage Under Fire* (1996) has a character, Captain Karen Emma Walden, who embodies multiple female roles: mother, daughter, wage earner, patriot and fighter. The character's very name, "Walden", resonates with American individuality and resourcefulness and adds to the aura of the role, as does the choice of the popular actress, Meg Ryan to portray her. In keeping with the high number of single parent families of the late twentieth century, there is no husband in the film, so the typical role of wife is missing. The story is about the effort to

determine what happened when Walden's helicopter was shot down and the crew was attacked by Iraqis. The resolution, that she died fighting a rear-guard action so that the others could escape, gives the character a heroic stature. The focus in this film is on the character of the protagonist. There is no discussion of why Americans are fighting. There are no references to the nobility of the cause. This film fits in with the pattern established in the Vietnam era films.

In conclusion, when a film is studied, the date of production must be carefully noted. The more distant in time World War II becomes, more controversial aspects of war will become subjects of films, a tendency that will become more pronounced at the time of the Vietnam War. The origins of this change can be found in films dealing with the Italian campaign and arise there for three reasons: the questionable military strategy, the change in status in Italy from Axis to Ally, and the close relationship between Italians and Americans. This last two points raise the question of who is a friend and who is an enemy and show the difficulty of differentiating between the two. They are precursors of Vietnam War films. *A Walk in the Sun* (1946), directed by Lewis Milestone, who also directed *North Star* and *All Quiet on the Western Front*, and *The Story of G.I. Joe* (1945), directed by William Wellman, depict the waste of human and cultural life. Other films such as *A Bridge Too Far* (1977) and *Anzio* examine the contentious relationship between members of the high command. *A Bridge Too Far* (1977) recreates a failed plan of British Field Marshall Montgomery and *Anzio* shows the poor organization of the attacking U.S forces. The Vietnam era films were a continuation of a critical picture of the military that started in 1945 and continued until the early 1980s when such films as *An Officer and a Gentleman* (1982) and *Top Gun* (1986) began to reverse the tide of negative films, a reversal that continued after the Gulf War.

Footnotes

1. Martin Luther King, speech at Riverside Church, N.Y.C, April 4, 1967
2. Japanese duplicity in negotiations: *Wake Island* (1942) and *Tora! Tora! Tora!* (1970). The latter film blames the Japanese war party and puts the blame on Tojo, the Japanese leader who is rarely mentioned in high school history books. Anti-war films are the *Bridges at Toko-Ri* and almost any of the Vietnam films. *Born on the Fourth of July* (1989) is good, if edited.
3. Professional military man: *Patton* (1970). Conflict between professional soldiers and recruits: *Bataan* (1943), *Sands of Iwo Jima* (1949), *From Here to Eternity* (1953); disobeying orders: *Apocalypse Now* (1979); sacrifice for group: *Bataan* and *In Harm's Way* (1965); cruelty toward enemy: *Saving Private Ryan* (1998).
4. Renov, Michael, *Hollywood's Wartime Woman*, pp.18-22
5. Koppes, Clayton B., *Hollywood Goes to War*, p.123
6. Renov, pp. 85-86
7. Koppes, p. 187

LESSON PLANS. Numbers refer to the topics as listed in the curriculum unit.

1. Justice of War and the Causes of War: Vietnam, Korea and World War II (4 class periods)

In this section and the following section, students will explore theories about what makes some wars “just”, how certain rules of war have been developed, and what ethical limits are put on the conduct of soldiers in war, both in the use of weapons and in the treatment of civilians. They will do this by reading background in philosophy and then will begin to examine these ideas critically by viewing several films.

Note that films produced at the time of World War II favored the war, whereas films produced at the time of Vietnam, even though they might have a World War II setting, are more likely to question the value of war.

Thomas Aquinas: Web site. <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/3.htm>.

Find reasons for just wars in the second section of the second part, question 40, in the section on vices that are opposed to peace.

Films: *Wake Island, Tora! Tora! Tora!, Action in the North Atlantic In Harm's Way, The Green Berets; Gardens of Stone, Apocalypse Now, Born on the Fourth of July*

Background of the Causes of War:

Have students explain whether or not each of Aquinas' three qualifications for a just war is applicable to the following twentieth century wars.

1. The war must be declared by a sovereign who has legal authority.
 - a. How does this apply to a monarchy? Who has the authority?
 - b. How does this apply to the United States? What has the authority?
What provided legal authority in World Wars I and II?
What provided the authority in Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf War?
2. The war must be fought for a just cause.
 - a. What were the just causes in World Wars I and II?
 - b. What were the reasons in Korea?
 - c. What were the reasons in Vietnam?
 - d. What were the reasons in the Gulf War?
3. War must be waged with the right intentions.
 - a. How was good advanced and evil avoided in each of the wars?
 - b. Did each war secure peace and punish people who did evil?

Example 1: World War II

Wake Island (:24-:29) and *Tora! Tora! Tora!* (:0-:20) show Japanese diplomatic duplicity in the hours before the unprovoked attack. The diplomats in the former are grinning caricatures; those in the latter are portrayed more sympathetically. *Pearl Harbor* (2001) mentions Japanese reasons for the attack, such as a threatened oil supply.

1. How did Japanese aggression at Pearl Harbor lead to a just war for the U.S.?
2. Did lack of supplies give the Japanese a just reason to attack?

Action in the North Atlantic (first 15 minutes) shows an attack on American merchant ship before Pearl Harbor.

1. What are the rights of neutrals?
2. How is this attack an act of war?

Example 2: Vietnam: Pro and Anti

Pro-War Films: *In Harm's Way*, *The Green Berets*

In Harm's Way (:42-:48) and *Green Berets* (:0-:10, 1:10-1:12), both of which are John Wayne films, wholeheartedly support the war in Vietnam. The former film made in 1965, but set in World War II, alludes to the 1965 attribution of Vietnam to Lyndon Johnson's bellicosity by having Ensign Jer Torrey (Brandon deWilde) talk to his Navy Captain father (John Wayne) about World War II being a "trumped-up Mr. Roosevelt's War". John Wayne sets the boy straight by reminding him that World War I had been "Mr. Wilson's war" and that both wars had been entered in for the right reasons. The deWilde character is physically smaller and apparently weaker than his father. Previous scenes have established that the son is Harvard educated (the effeminate east) and is more like his mother. By the end of the film, the son has seen the light and has died heroically. *The Green Berets* is the only other pro-Vietnam war film. The sections mentioned above given refer to Communist support of American enemies, atrocities of the Viet Cong and the importance of the future generation.

Questions:

1. Who were the presidents at the time of Vietnam War?
2. How does the physical contrast between deWilde and Wayne make deWilde seem weaker?
3. How does the identification of the son with an educational institution allude to the mid 1960s protesters against the war?
4. How do the references to Chinese, Russian and Czech Communists indicate a fear of monolithic Communism?
5. Did the South Vietnamese have elections?
6. How is the reference to the Viet Cong killing of professors and teachers a response to anti-war teach-ins in the U.S.?

**Anti-war Films: *Gardens of Stone* (:10-:15, :52-:58, 1:09-1:10);
Apocalypse Now (1:03- 1:08); *Born on the Fourth of July***

Most films about the Vietnam War take positions against the war and refer to the waste of lives, both American and Vietnamese, the inefficiency of the military, and the wrong motives for fighting.

Throughout *Gardens of Stone* we are shown the bitter contrast between the physically fit, well-drilled soldiers of the Army's Old Guard and their sad duty, which is to provide a burial detail for the Vietnam dead. The picture also uses sound in a disconcerting way, starting the audio for a new scene in the last few sections of the previous scene. The effect is to mix war and peace and to keep the viewer off-balance. *Born on the Fourth of July* is an excellent film that shows students how a Vietnam hawk was changed to a dove. This change is emphasized by the choice of the lead actor, Tom Cruise, who had a hawkish role as a fighter pilot in *Top Gun* (1986), a film that presented a positive view of the military.

Questions and activities:

1. What does the sergeant in *Gardens of Stone* mean when he says there is “nothing to win” and “no way to win it”?
2. Why would Vietnam be thought of as “genocide”?
3. What is meant by “If we fight, fight it right”?
4. How does the girl's father, who says the war is a boon to Research and Development, represent the military-industrial complex?
5. What were the stages in Ron Kovic's change from hawk to dove?
6. Find music that opposed the Vietnam War.
7. Interview people who were of draft age in the mid-1960s to early 1970s. Find out their views on the war. Did they protest or join the military? Find out what public figures did during the war. Suggestions: President George W. Bush, former President Bill Clinton, former Vice-Presidents Al Gore and Dan Quayle, and Senator Bob Kerrey.
8. Assign students to watch *The Sand Pebbles* (1966), *Anzio*, and *Patton*. How does each of these films portray the military establishment, the waste of war, the suffering of civilians. Make sure that students notice the dates of each movie's production. How might each film be interpreted as a protest against the Vietnam War?

2. Nature and Responsibility of the Soldier

Web Site: Lawrence M. Hinman's web site on “Combat Ethics: *Saving Private Ryan*”

Book: Bayles, Michael D., *Right Conduct: Theories and Applications*

The web site analyzes the military ethics shown in *Saving Private Ryan*. This lesson will summarize some of his points there and then enable students to find some parallels in other films.

All soldiers are required to obey lawful orders, to respect civilian immunity and the rights of prisoners, to follow the rules of war. This is the general concept of *jus in bello* (right in war). This lesson will consider three problems of interpretation of the laws.

Who is a civilian?

This was the general problem in the Vietnam War and is addressed in the films. The Viet Cong were members of an irregular army who dressed and moved along with the civilians. Distinguishing military from civilian was impossible and it was legal to attack villages that were suspected of harboring or supporting Viet Cong. In the films the attack on a village becomes a sad cliché. *Apocalypse Now* has a variation in an attack on a sampan. Sometimes the reaction of the soldiers is to show compassion for those civilians who survived. In the following scenes, have students discuss whether the soldiers were justified in their actions, especially in considering whether all the people should be considered to be the enemy.

Relevant films and scenes:

Born on the Fourth of July (:29-:38) firing on village. Surviving baby left, no compassion shown. The commanding officer says he doesn't want to hear about it because the enemy was using the village as a cover.

Platoon, (:50-:55) The platoon comes to a village and finds food assumed to be for the Viet Cong. A villager is beaten to death and the village is torched. (The language is inappropriate for classroom use, play it without the sound.)

Apocalypse Now (:40-:50) Attack on village which is burned. (1:10-1:13) boat is stopped and searched. Suspicious movement leads to killing. The soldiers take the surviving puppy.

Who is a prisoner, when does captivity begin and how is a prisoner treated?

Relevant films and scenes:

Battle of the Bulge (1:14-1:18) The Malmedy massacre of U.S. prisoners by Germans. This is a clear example of criminal activity.

Saving Private Ryan Just after the beach is cleared (:20) German soldiers have their hands up to surrender, but they are shot while in the trenches. Were they still a threat or is this an example of excessive force? (1:33) The platoon captures a German soldier. They can not take him with them and their choice is to kill him or let him go. The German might fight them in the future. Did they do the right thing?

Is it right to kill?

The answer to this is usually “kill or be killed.” A way to harden the emotions is by distancing oneself from the enemy and thinking of him as another type of creature- an animal or some threatening thing. One way to achieve distance is to use racial epithets or

designations such as “ape,” “baboon,” or “slopehead.” Films produced in World War II use these epithets freely with the assumption that the movie audience will feel the same way. Epithets are used in Vietnam era films, but less frequently and usually by less sympathetic characters in the films. Post-1950 World War II films, made at a time when the U.S. had made allies of the former enemies, avoid racial epithets.

Relevant films and scenes:

Sergeant York (1:40) He kills to save lives. How does this shorten the war?

Saving Private Ryan (1:40) Every man I kill, the further from home I feel.

(1:05) He’s saved ten times the number of men in his command who have been killed.

Anzio (last 5 minutes) Men kill each other because they are scared to death and they like to.

Big Red One (:20) American says Americans don’t murder in war, they kill. Because you don’t murder animals, you kill animals. The scene switches to the German camp where the German says that Germans don’t murder, they kill.

Patton (:50) Patton asks chaplain to pray for good weather. The chaplain replies that he is “praying for good weather so we can kill our fellow man.”

Other activities: Have students consult the web site on Military Ethics; select one of the questions. Try and apply the problem to situations in other films.

3. The View of the Enemy

Is the enemy thought of as a “fellow man” or as an animal? In World War II films produced during the war, the early tendency was to treat the enemy, particularly, the Japanese, as stereotypically evil creatures who were referred to frequently as “monkeys.” Their fighting ability was usually acknowledged, although it was pointed out that they had advantages: secrecy and surprise at Pearl Harbor and cruelty and criminal behavior at Bataan. After 1945, as relations between the United States and Japan and Germany became friendlier and markets for American films reopened, the depictions of the former enemies softened in later war films.

Relevant scenes and films:

Bataan: Introduction refers to “barbaric conquest.” At the end, (1:23-1:31)

the Japanese sneakily move in disguised as trees, similar to a Shakespearean play. (:25) They “can live for a month on what you use in two days.” A similar statement is made about the Viet Cong in the following film.

Gardens of Stone (:37) “We’re not going to lose to an Asian farmer.” The answer is that “he can go 100 miles on no food through jungles you wouldn’t believe.”

Guadalcanal Diary (:45) “They aren’t people. Stop thinking about it. You’ll go crazy.”

Patton (Part II, :55) German calls Patton a “true warrior” Mutual respect.

A Midnight Clear The entire story line addresses the similarity of the enlisted men on the two sides.

Examples of cruelty:

Wake Island (1:05) Pilot in parachute and helpless is shot by Japanese.

The Longest Day (1:30) Has a similar scene in square at Ste.Mere Eglise.

Sympathetic figure:

Three Came Home The Japanese officer is on the surface more sympathetic because he has studied in the U.S. and admires a book written by Agnes Newton-Keith; also his family was killed in the bombing of Hiroshima. However, he is insensitive to the needs of the prisoners and doesn't seem to understand Mrs. Keith's surprise and anger because he had gotten a copy of the book by taking it from her home.

Student analysis: Show *The Longest Day* (last 10 minutes of Part I and first 10 minutes of Part II). How is the attack seen from the German viewpoint? How does the German officer's treatment of his dog make the man a more sympathetic figure?

4.The Role of Women (2 or 3 lessons)

Films: *So Proudly We Hail* (1943), *Three Came Home* (1950), *The Home Front*

Posters: National Archives

The purpose of these lessons is to have students consider the various ways in which women are depicted in films. There is a list of roles at the end of this lesson.

The first two films show women as heroines and each has similarities to other war films in showing fortitude, heroism, female bonding, and loyalty to the group. The 1943 film was made as a tribute to nurses who had served on Corregidor and the 1950 film is based Agnes Newton-Keith's book that described her experiences as a Japanese prisoner. Even in these films women are referred to and seen in stereotypical terms and occupy typical roles that are seen elsewhere: nurturer, inspirational object/morale builder, siren, sex object, mother, wife/girlfriend, martyr, child.

Scenes to Use:

So Proudly We Hail :29-:38 Ship to Bataan, beginning of romance.

:45-50 Japanese prisoner ward; death of woman in childbirth.

:61-66 Olivia sacrifices herself for the group.

1:08-1:17 Why we fight.

1:20-1:27 Reasons nurses won't be removed.

1:43-1:49 Marriage and honeymoon at gun casement.

Three Came Home :25-:30: Miscarriage of child and cruelty of being lonely.

:50-:53: Farewell to husbands, worry about sexual mistreatment.

1:15-1:16 Attempted rape by Japanese soldier.

Questions on roles in *So Proudly We Hail*:

1. How is nursing a nurturing role? How do the nurses help the patients?
2. Why does Olivia want to kill Japanese and what stops her from doing this in the hospital?
3. How does the change in Olivia's hairstyle change her from "nice girl" into a seductress?
4. How does the head nurse "Ma" represent actual and surrogate motherhood?
5. Why is the death of Ma's son a part of a pattern and what must be done to stop the cycle?
6. Why are the women needed for morale and why would their removal be bad?
7. How does the marriage fit the moral requirements of the Hays code?
8. Why do references to the nurses as "girls" who talk like a "bunch of old women" and "hysterical schoolgirls" establish the women as inferior people?
9. In each film what sexual abuse do the women fear? Are their fears based in fact?

Additional activities:

Have a student read *Three Came Home* and find similarities with the film. Compare the attitudes toward the Japanese in the film and the book.

Watch *The Home Front* and describe how women should support the war effort. What contributions are specifically "feminine"? How did excise taxes affect women?

Examine the posters on the Internet sites listed in the bibliography. How are they aimed at women? How do the Norman Rockwell posters on the Four Freedoms reinforce the stereotypical roles?

Other roles for students to scrutinize and consider:

Suffering woman: Pvt. Ryan's mother. Long shot from rear emphasizes her emptiness.

Manipulative wife: wife in *Bridges of Toko-Ri* who used influence to get to Japan.

Fighting Women: *The North Star*, *Enemy at the Gates*, *Return to Bataan*.

Praying Woman: *Guadalcanal Diary* (1:10-1:15) woman prays, now men must pray.

Martyr: *Wake Island*: wives who die at Pearl Harbor and in bombing of Warsaw.

Mother at home: recipient of letter in *Bataan*.

Prostitutes: *Dirty Dozen*, *Sands of Iwo Jima*, *Born on the Fourth of July*.

John Wayne and Women: *Green Berets*: little girl likes necklace "she's a woman, isn't

she?"; *They Were Expendable*: women make themselves beautiful for him; *Sands of Iwo Jima*: "hope that child is beautiful like me and intelligent like you."

Survivor: *Gardens of Stone*, *Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo*.

Women who know how to use lipstick: *Saboteur*, Patricia Martin uses it to write a note to the F.B.I.; *Pearl Harbor*, nurse uses her lipstick to mark heads of injured at triage station.

5. Government Propaganda/ Information films (2 lessons)

December 7th (1943) is the prototype for Pearl Harbor films. Although, and probably because, it was a studio-made film that contained no actual footage of the attack on Pearl Harbor, the visual images were so strong that they became part of the accepted myth of the attack and they have become equated with the historical record. Many of these images convey certain American values and have been repeated in all the subsequent films about Pearl Harbor. A comparison with the 1952 *Victory at Sea*, (Part 2, *The Pacific Boils Over*) film shows interesting similarities and differences. In each film the basic mythic story is that Americans were in the Pacific paradise of Hawaii, unaware of the impending attack and doing ordinary civilian and military things when they were attacked. The innocence and naivete of Americans is contrasted with the cunning, sneakiness and aggression of the Japanese. Americans use resourcefulness and quick response to fight back and repel the attack. The many casualties, both wounded and dead, are referred to reverentially at the end of the film. The *December 7th* film is 34 minutes. Approximately 15 minutes of this film is reused, with some editing, in the *Victory at Sea* segment. Have students watch the film and answer questions. Some sample questions are:

Who is the director? Did the military help make the film?
What ordinary activities are people doing ?
Are there religious figures or religious services?
Are there scenes of mass confusion and running people?
Are there shots of people just being missed by gunfire?
Is there an attempt to explain that we would have won had we been warned?
Are there references to a “people’s war”?

Other questions useful to all films are:
Is the group in the film multi-ethnic?
Does anyone play a musical instrument?
What sort of weapons and technology are used?
How is the chain of command shown?
Are there references to government leaders or families back home?
Are there pets?

December 7th and *Victory at Sea* discussion questions:

1. Why are the Japanese no longer demonized in the later film?
2. In each of the films what does the inclusion of a church scene indicate about American priorities?
3. There is violent sudden death in each film, but are the deaths bloody? Is this difference caused by improved technology in the presentation of death or by feelings of compassion for civilians who had relatives in the military?

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Web Sources for Students

The History Place. <http://www.historyplace.com/unitedstates/pacificwar/index.html>. (4/23/01).

Pictures of the Bataan Death March. Other sections of this site focus on African-

Americans in WWII and on other aspects of WWII, such as production and military theaters.

Monte Cassino home page. http://www.officine.it/montecassino/main_e.htm. (5/30/01).

National Archives. *Powers of Persuasion*. (4/10/01). Washington, D.C.

www.nara.gov/exhall/powers/women.html. (4/10/01).

Four posters showing the role of women in WWII: secretary, adoring, activist. (*We can do it*, identified incorrectly as *Rosie the Riveter*.)

www.nara.gov/exhall/powers/freedoms.html. (4/10/01).

This site has the four Norman Rockwell posters for the four Freedoms and also an excerpt from the Franklin D. Roosevelt speech.

www.nara.gov/exhall/people/people.html. (4/10/01).

This exhibit deals with roles of women and minorities in WWII: blacks, Navaho, and Nisei.

Northwestern University. <http://www.library.nwu.edu/govpub/collections>. (4/22/01).

This site has a collection of World War II posters.

World War II Home Page. <http://www.hist.unt.edu/09w-amw4.htm>. (4/22/01).

This is a huge site with many links to other databases. It has a good section on women in World War II.

Music Web Sites:

Jack's "Midi Music." <http://www.Discovery.net.com/~ajsnead/patriotic/usasongs.htm>.

(5/10/01).

Military band versions of songs.

<http://www.lilesnet.com/patriotic/toc.htm>. (5/10/01).

This site has songs and lyrics.

Partial Filmography

Anglophilia

Mrs. Miniver (1942), William Wyler

Battle of Britain (1942), Frank Capra, *Part of the Why We Fight Series*

The Eastern Front

The North Star (1943), Lewis Milestone

Enemy at the Gates (2001), Jean-Jacques Annaud

Action in the North Atlantic (1943), Lloyd Bacon

Patriotic Build-up to World War II

Sgt. York (1941), Howard Hawks

Yankee Doodle Dandy (1942), Michael Curtiz

Pearl Harbor

December 7th (1942), John Ford
Tora! Tora! Tora! (1970), Richard Fleischer
Pearl Harbor (2001), Michael Bay
From Here to Eternity (1953), Fred Zinneman

Other Pacific Theater

Wake Island (1942), John Farrow
Bataan (1943), Tay Garnell
Guadalcanal Diary (1943), Lewis Seiler
They Were Expendable (1945), John Ford
Sands of Iwo Jima (1949), Alan Dwan
Midway (1976), John Smight

D-Day

The Longest Day (1962), Ken Annakin
Saving Private Ryan (1998), Steven Spielberg

Battle of the Bulge

Battle of the Bulge (1965) Ken Annakin
Patton (1970), Franklin Schaffner
A Bridge Too Far (1977), Richard Attenborough
A Midnight Clear (1991), Keith Gordon
The Big Red One (1980), Samuel Fuller

Problems of War

Judgment at Nuremberg (1961), Stanley Kramer
Nuremberg (2000), Yves Simoneau
The Best Years of Their Lives (1946), William Wyler

Women

War Comes to America (1945), Frank Capra (Part of the *Why We Fight* Series
Saboteur (1942) and *Notorious* (1946), Alfred Hitchcock
So Proudly We Hail (1943), Mark Sandrich
Three Came Home (1950), Jean Negulesco

Korean War

Bridges at Toko-Ri (1954), Mark Robson

Vietnam War

Apocalypse Now (1979), Francis Ford Coppola
Platoon (1986), Oliver Stone
Gardens of Stone (1987), Francis Ford Coppola
Born on the Fourth of July (1989), Oliver Stone

Gulf War

Courage Under Fire (1996), Edward Zwick