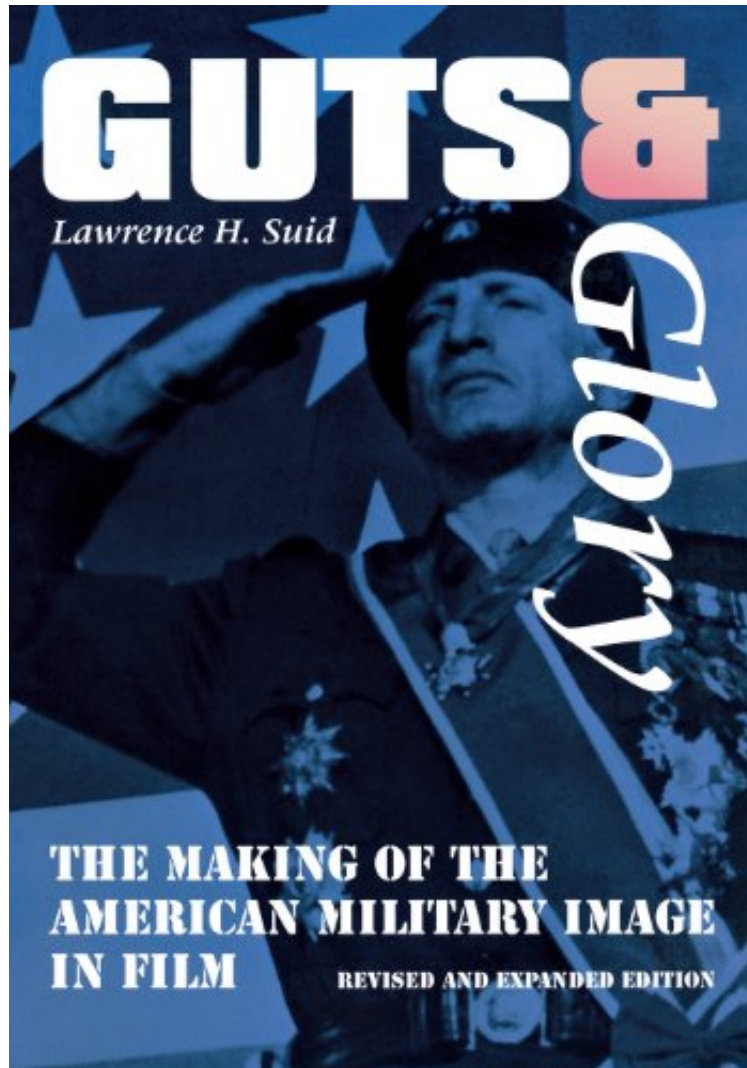


(Download pdf ebook) Guts and Glory: The Making of the American Military Image in Film

Guts and Glory: The Making of the American Military Image in Film

Lawrence H. Suid

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Lawrence H. Suid : Guts and Glory: The Making of the American Military Image in Film before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Guts and Glory: The Making of the American Military Image in Film:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Good, Though a Little ChippyBy FernandoFilm and military historian Lawrence H. Suid's Guts and Glory: The Making of the American Military Image in Film is an updated version of a published twenty-six years ago, now encompassing cinematic depictions of the First World War up to the Gulf War and Somalia. Thus, younger readers will be glad to see movies such as Black Hawk Down (2002) and

Windtalkers (2002) come under Suid's updated study. His chronological approach amply highlights the US military in the vicissitudes of Hollywood image making since the film industry's inception. As such, Guts and Glory is, at its crux, a study in cinematic sociology, with ramifications for political science. Suid's span runs from classics to lesser-known movies. He includes fantasies such as *The Final Countdown* (1980), smarmy failures such as *Pearl Harbor* (2001), the humorous - like *Stripes* (1981), assorted millennial and survivalist works, and those that otherwise suffered from "the ambiguity of conflicting images" such as *Pork Chop Hill* (1959) (201). World events are often midwife to the film industry; hence, Suid discusses at length the effects of the Cuban Missile Crisis and growing atomic arsenals (229ff) in the making of the American military image. With their extended implications for the American mythos, politics and popular sentiment impact the minds of producers and screenwriters. For most films, producers worked closely with the Pentagon, providing them scripts to get their comments. This was more for material than spiritual support. Throughout, there is a pleasing balance in Suid's analyses. He lauds films such as *The Killing Fields* (1984) and *Southern Comfort* (1981) for at least nominally standing "above the political issues" to let "the visual images of slaughter speak for themselves" (468). Thus, he applies his vast knowledge in addressing why certain films proved effective or interesting, and why others did not - why *Full Metal Jacket* (1987) "became a strangely detached and uneven movie" (525), or why *From Here to Eternity* (1953) proved, "one of the few Hollywood portrayals of the armed forces that ranks both as a great military film and a great American movie" (151). Several films are cross-categorical, such as *Dr. Strangelove, or: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb* (1964). This touches upon one of Suid's key subjects, how each military service attempted to aid Hollywood in repairing or enhancing their respective images. In the course of this discussion, Suid includes some surprises, such as *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* (1977), brought to light because of the Air Force's staid approach to the existence of UFOs (494). Discussed at length are the movies depicting and interpreting the Vietnam War, a study worth a separate book. John Wayne and his role in military movies warrant two chapters (116-135; 247-277). A work of this broad a reach bears a few criticisms. Suid seems a bit over-determined when he states that Spielberg did a "great disservice to the men he was trying to memorialize" (633) with respect to *Saving Private Ryan*. He omits the Western, particularly this genre's portrayal of Native Americans and Mexicans in conflict with the US Cavalry. Suid discusses John Ford's productions, and Ford made several movies where racist dynamics were bound-up with Cold War politics - such as *Fort Apache* (1948) and *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* (1950). Finally, Suid could have briefly spoken to how America cinema affected perceptions of America for international audiences. Still, Suid's research remains a paradigm of thorough inquiry. He includes a helpful index to the 220-some films that come under his purview. There is also an interesting appendix delineating Suid's vast number of interviewees, which includes dozens of directors, producers, screenwriters, actors, technical advisors, US military personnel, critics, and studio executives. In the end, Suid believes that Americans likely watch war movies not out of bloodlust, but to enjoy "watching other people challenge death" (673). This book will likely remain a standard for years to come. 14 of 18 people found the following review helpful.

humungous worth every word
By fastreader
This is a mighty tome that has something intelligent to say about virtually every war movie made in Hollywood, and even some that weren't from the Hollywood studios. More amazing yet, where I have a good remembrance of, and a firm opinion about, a given movie, I find that Suid has hit the nail on the head with his comments. Especially notable was the treatment he gives to two fairly recent films, *Saving Private Ryan* and *Pearl Harbor*. Almost everyone I know, and the critics as well, hailed SPR as a work of genius. I thought it was dreck, that it got just about everything wrong that it could have gotten wrong, and finally I walked out of the film when the beleaguered Yank says he's run out of ammo and does anyone have any "bandoliers"? Over the course of half a dozen pages, Suid explains to my satisfaction exactly what I found SPR unsatisfying. He even gives a preview of such very recent films as *Blackhawk Down*, and there too he's right on the money. Full disclosure: I know Suid, because he interviewed me about a book that became a film that is mentioned (mostly favorably) in his text.

Guts and Glory: The Making of the American Military Image in Film is the definitive study of the symbiotic relationship between the film industry and the United States armed services. Since the first edition was published nearly two decades ago, the nation has experienced several wars, both on the battlefield and in movie theatres and living rooms at home. Now author Lawrence Suid has extensively revised and expanded his classic history of the mutual exploitation of the film industry and the military, exploring how Hollywood has reflected and effected changes in America's image of its armed services. This significantly expanded edition has been brought completely up to date and includes many of the most recent war films, such as *Saving Private Ryan*, *U-571*, *Pearl Harbor*, and *Windtalkers*. Lawrence H. Suid, a military historian, is the author of several books and has recently appeared on *The History Channel*, *Turner Classic Movies*, and *CNN*. He lives in Greenbelt, Maryland. [Click here for his website.](#)

"The definitive book about the relationship between Hollywood and the military." -- *Crosswinds Weekly*
"A 'revised and expanded' edition that can only be called definitive. It's hard to imagine anyone in the near future undertaking much less completing a study of such thoroughness and detail." -- *Journal of Military History*
"This is excellent film history in a much neglected area of scholarship." -- *Library Journal*
"Massive and instructive.... Suid offers detailed

synopses of the plots of the films, his analyses of their critical worth, and his takes on the films' contributions -- or lack thereof -- to the American military image." -- VVA Veteran "The most detailed source of information about the stories Hollywood tells about the American military and how the Pentagon seeks to portray itself in the film media." -- Air Power History "Well worth the price for those interested in the relationship between Hollywood and the military establishment or, more generally, between warfare and American culture." -- Army History "As a behind-the-lens history, Suid's *Guts and Glory* is a perfect complement to the films he discusses at length." -- Cineaste "Without question, Larry Suid's research completely covers Hollywood's myriad role in shaping public opinion about national conflicts and his many conclusions amplify exactly what went on between Pentagon officials and big-name directors as each side jockeyed the other hoping to find an advantageous concession." -- Film History "An excellent contribution to the growing studies on American films and to the war film genre in particular." -- Film and History "Suid adroitly describes the often rocky relationship between the military and the film industry, the result of which is the public's view of the military." -- Marine Corps Gazette "Sweeping, comprehensive, detailed, revealing; the book is always interesting, occasionally surprising, and sometimes amusing. Suid has set out to analyze the making American war movies from the earliest days of film at the beginning of the Twentieth Century -- before there was a Hollywood." -- NYMAS Newsletter "A seminal and monumental contribution to the history of the American military in film." -- On Point "An indispensable reference work. Meticulously documented, it is a classic in its own right and an essential research tool for anyone seriously interested in this field." -- Quarterly of Film and Video "An interesting, intelligent and never-pedantic analysis of a partnership that helped shape America's view of its military and the world." -- Wall Street Journal "Brings Hollywood pictures of war into focus." -- Wilson Quarterly "A pioneering work in the history of war films." -- John Chambers "[*Guts and Glory*] examines a selection of war movies from 1915 to the 1970s, and is noteworthy for focusing attention on the relationship between the Hollywood establishment and the American military-industrial complex." -- Choice About the Author Lawrence H. Suid, a military historian, is the author of several books and has recently appeared on The History Channel, Turner Classic Movies, and CNN.