



# Movies and Culture Report



## One to Watch out of the Whole Bunch

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# THEATRICAL RELEASES

September 2



**A Good Old Fashioned Orgy** (R for pervasive strong sexual content, graphic nudity, language) As the title indicates, this is about an orgy among a group of 30-somethings, male and female. Jason Sudeikis, Lake Bell, Leslie Bibb, Will Forte.

Funny stuff, huh. Raunchy sex comedies have been around for a very long time. Unfortunately, we live in an age where

even delivery of this promised, on-screen orgy has no barriers left to break down between what society accepts and total debauchery. This film's mere presence should be offensive, but we reside in a society where people actively try to offend. We are the generation which will, like Ancient Rome, prove there's no satisfaction in depravity.

The danger here, as I see it, is the advertising.

Children will see the commercials. They will see the online ads and other marketing. When the film arrives in the on-demand coffers, its commercials will play every time people turn on their televisions, just as all on-demand movie trailers do. The constant reference to orgy or sexual

liberalism or the plethora of other related topics—subjects which should, ideally, be kept securely within adult circles—will be transmitted directly into the minds and hearts of our unsuspecting, unprotected children.

Even if your child never sees those ads, the bombardment will impact the young minds and hearts of neighborhood children, school mates, and teenage babysitters. It *is* a troubling intrusion into **our** homes.

Why is this impact so rarely considered when films such as this hit the market?





## THEATRICAL RELEASES, continued



**Apollo 18** (PG-13 for language, brief nudity) “Decades-old found footage from NASA’s abandoned Apollo 18 mission, where two American astronauts were sent on a secret expedition, reveals the reason the U.S. has never returned to the moon.” Lloyd Owen, Warren Christie.

Yet another “found footage” movie like *Blair Witch Project*, *Paranormal Activity*, *Diary of the Dead*, *REC*, *Monster*, *The Last Exorcism*, *Man Bites Dog*, and *The Last Broadcast*. All of these films are thematic knock-offs from the mostly unknown but still influential film *Cannibal Holocaust* (1980), a film banned in numerous countries for its possibly real depictions of torture and death. While results are mixed for this “lost footage” genre, one thing is pretty consistent: They’re made by young filmmakers on a shoestring budget.

Like the films mentioned above, this movie shows what it claims to be discovered footage of a horrific event shot in pseudo-documentary style. In this case it’s the lost footage

from an Apollo 18 trip to the moon. The two astronauts find something on the moon and it’s apparently very spooky. I haven’t heard any reliable early word on this film and the filmmaker, Gonzalo López-Gallego, does not have much of a directorial resumé from which to make any determination of the film’s worth, but the fact it’s dumped into a relatively dead weekend with no real competition is not a good sign.

### Also

**Shark Night 3D** horror coming at you out of the screen; guess we’ve become numb and must ratchet the gore up yet again to get the required adrenalin rush

**I’m Glad My Mother is Alive** French drama of a boy, adopted as a toddler, who searches for his birth mother and finds her, with less than healthy results

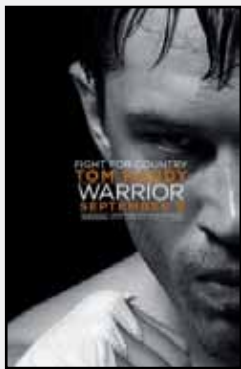
**Love Crime** French drama of war between two women: boss and protégé





## THEATRICAL RELEASES, continued

### September 9



**Warrior** (PG-13 for sequences of intense mixed martial arts fighting, some language, thematic material) ([Watch the trailer.](#)) Tom Hardy, Jennifer Morrison, Joel Edgerton, Nick Nolte, Noah Emmerich.

Last year's movie *Inception* introduced audience members to Tom Hardy who will increase his visibility with the role of Bane in Christopher Nolan's final outing in the Batman series, *The Dark Knight Rises*. This film, *Warrior*, will not only remind everyone of actor Hardy but will introduce them to another powerful actor, Joel Edgerton. Edgerton is a performer who has been working for years but never quite broke into the popular consciousness. I believe this film may finally bring him to movie-goers' awareness.

Hardy and Edgerton portray two sons of an alcoholic father. The brothers battle one another in the ring in a mixed martial arts competition.

Written and directed by Gavin O'Connor—responsible for *Miracle* (2004), one of the best sports films of all time—this is the first obvious Oscar contender of the 2011 season.

In my book, this film marks an early opening of the releases intended for Oscar contention, normally scheduled for autumn.





## THEATRICAL RELEASES, continued



**Contagion** (PG-13 for disturbing content, language) Newsflash! We're all going to get sick and die. ([Watch the trailer.](#)) Matt Damon, Marion Cotillard, Kate Winslet, Bryan Cranston, Jude Law, Gwyneth Paltrow, Laurence Fishburne, Elliot Gould.

Director Stephen Soderbergh has enjoyed a long and productive career. He has also left a long line of self-aware, over-hyped bore-fests in his wake (*The Informant!*, *Ocean's 11*, *Che Part I & II*, *The Girlfriend Experience*, *Traffic*, *Solaris*, *Erin Brockovich*, and *Sex, Lies and Videotape*). A film about a pandemic starring over-rated actors Gwyneth Paltrow and Matt Damon does not instantly promise a break from Soderbergh's string of yawners.

Not that the man has no talent. He is gifted in many ways. The problem is that his gifts are constantly overwhelmed by his heavy hands. Seriously, try to sit through *Bubble*, the *Che* movies, or *The Good German*. Sheesh. When we extend our list to include his productions *A Scanner Darkly*, *I'm Not*

*There*, *Syriana*, *The Jacket*, and *Criminal*, it becomes clear he has a taste for the most non-entertaining entertainment currently available.

Wait for a week or two before dropping money down to see this film. If it's still doing well and the more sober critics haven't panned it, then knock yourself out. I smell a stinker dressed up in fancy clothes.

*Also*

**Shaolin** Chinese drama; tagline: "In a land torn by strife, the righteous monks of Shaolin stand as a beacon of hope for the oppressed masses." China's feuding warlords want power, just as they've been doing for thousands of years. We really think Buddhist monks can bring ultimate hope to the oppressed masses after thousands of years of never doing it before?

**Main Street** drama; residents' lives are changed by the arrival of a stranger with a controversial plan to save their small, decaying NC hometown

**Tanner Hall** another R-rated, coming-of-age "peek into" the world of an all-girls boarding school





# DVD RELEASES

September 9



**X-Men: First Class** (PG-13 for intense sequences of action and violence, some sexual content including brief partial nudity, language) ([Watch the trailer.](#)) James McAvoy, Michael Fassbender, Jennifer Lawrence, Kevin Bacon, Rose Byrne, Nicholas Hoult, January Jones.

The X-Men franchise never quite found its feet. The first film laid good groundwork and promised a fun franchise. The second film floundered a bit but smartly focused on Hugh Jackman's Wolverine. The third film (*X-Men: The Last Stand*), with its overt homosexual allegory and ridiculous plot, killed any hope the franchise would be worthwhile. Following that blunder, attempt was made to re-launch the franchise with *X-Men Origins: Wolverine*; it seemed the series was finally dead.

*X-Men: First Class*, an origins story for the whole mythos, manages to resurrect the franchise with a smart script focused on character instead of social agenda. There are mild attempts to insert "we're here, we're mutant, get used

to it" homosexual rights connections, but they are masked and barely register.

The film delves into some interesting territory for a McMovie. The two leads, Magneto (Fassbender) and Charles Xavier (McAvoy), lock horns regarding the role of vengeance and anger in the use of power. Heavy stuff for a bunch of people with blue skin and superhero suits.

## Culture Quote

We all recall "A penny saved is a penny earned," at least we who had parents that experienced the Great Depression. How about, "Think you used enough dynamite, there, Butch?" How about the often misquoted line from *Casablanca*, "Play it again Sam." Even the '60s had tag lines and quotes. "Give peace a chance" or "Make love not war." Lyrics from songs, lines from movies have become a large part of the American culture. Just think for a moment and you will come up with your own.

- Hensley on [Movie Quotes That Define American Culture](#).





## DVD RELEASES, continued



**Hanna** (PG-13 for intense sequences of violence and action, some sexual material, language) ([Watch the trailer.](#)) Saoirse Ronan, Cate Blanchett, Eric Bana, Olivia Williams, Jason Flemyng, Tom Hollander.

Hanna (Ronan) is a teen raised to be an assassin. She is sent on a mission by her ex-CIA agent dad (Bana) and discovers she's being chased by an intelligence officer (Blanchett). Hanna runs, jumps, and kills while also learning more about herself and her past. Blah. Blah. Blah.

You'd think that if you were going to make an assassin you would pick the plainest, most forgettable-looking person available, not an attractive girl that would turn heads and easily stand out in any line up. But there I go again, trying to apply logic to the ridiculous.

If you forgot this was released, that's because it is forgettable. Feel free to forget it again.

### Also

**Everything Must Go** drug-related comedy

**Assassination Games** a Jean-Claude Van Damme action thriller

**A Cinderella Story: Once Upon a Song** a PG-rated family comedy





## DVD RELEASES, continued

August 16



**Star Wars: The Complete Saga** (released on Blu-Ray) (Episodes 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 rated PG; Episode 3 rated PG-13) ([Watch the trailer.](#)) Mark Hamill, Harrison Ford, Carrie Fisher, Alec Guinness, Peter Mayhew, Anthony Daniels, David Prowse, Kenny Baker, James Earl Jones, Frank Oz, Peter Cushing, Ian McDiarmid, Ewan McGregor, Natalie Portman, Hayden Christensen, Billy Dee Williams, Liam

Neeson, Ahmed Best, Samuel L. Jackson, Christopher Lee, Jimmy Smits, Temuera Morrison, Ray Park, Terence Stamp.

George Lucas is a master of squeezing blood from a turnip. His entire empire is based on a series of seriously flawed and often flat-out silly movies.

I am a child of the original *Star Wars* trilogy. They had deep influence on my young imagination and helped lead me into my lifelong love of film. I recognize the power of the first three films. To be honest, I also have to recognize they really

aren't that good when you strip away the special effects and marketing.

What I find interesting about this type release is the business angle—remember, Hollywood is big business. They could have easily released these films on Blu-Ray years ago, but dealing with *Star Wars* is like dealing with Disney: carefully timed, intentional release schedules calculated and launched to maximize the cashflow. There's nothing wrong with this; I just find it interesting we keep falling for the release tricks and act like somehow there's something new here.

All of these films have been out for, in some cases, decades and have been gone over a thousand times. What's the Blu-Ray release going to do? Allow you to loathe Jar Jar Binks and Ewoks in sharper definition?





## DVD RELEASES, continued



**Thor** (PG-13 for sequences of intense sci-fi action and violence) Chris Hemsworth, Natalie Portman, Anthony Hopkins, Tom Hiddleston, Stellan Skarsgård, Idris Elba, Ray Stevenson, Rene Russo, Clark Gregg, Kat Dennings. ([Watch the trailer.](#))

[Read Scott's review on Good News Film Reviews.](#)

I didn't give this a recommendation when it came out, **but** the further away from the film I get and the less I remember it, the more inclined I am to think I liked it. This probably has much to do with my two sons who absolutely adored the movie.

Ultimately, this is a cheeseball superhero film with high production values and a low syllable count. It is pap and, in honesty, doesn't pretend to be anything else. Compared with the other Marvel superhero movies such as *Spider-Man* or *Iron Man*, there's a notable lack of personality. That may simply be the result of Natalie Portman occupying one of the

lead roles.

**The Tempest** Helen Mirren's re-do of Shakespeare's classic

**Love Wedding Marriage** PG-13 Mandy Moore romantic comedy

**Incendies** "A mother's last wishes send twins Jeanne and Simon on a journey to Middle East in search of their tangled roots"; highly recommended French film. Won Best Feature Film at the 2011 Adelaide Film Festival in Australia. Rated R.

**Meek's Cutoff** Western; 1845 on the Oregon Trail





## Movie Watching Tip

# Virtue is Defined by the Hero's Goal



At the core of every film is a hero's attempt to obtain a goal. In *Back to the Future*, Marty McFly must get his parents to fall in love (and to find some plutonium). This goal will have immediate physical or psychological reward if attained—Marty gets to exist. Achieving the goal has an inherent purpose: It teaches the hero a moral lesson—the hero can only achieve his goal if he changes some aspect of his personality or behavior. Marty learns to be on time.

At the beginning of the film, Marty is scolded by Principal Strickland for being tardy: "No McFly ever amounted to anything in the history of Hill Valley!" The story's premise, initiated by Principal Strickland's statement, is that Marty will literally remake history for all of Hill Valley.

Because Marty learns to be on time, he and his family prosper while the bad guy, Biff, is ruined. Another use of time allows Doc to be resurrected at the end of the film because of a note Marty passed to him 'in the past' which warned Doc of the terrorists.

*Virtue expressed by the story:* Being on time saves lives and enables you to live happily and successfully.

Discover the virtues expressed in film by how the hero obtains his primary goal. What lesson must he learn in order to win? What is the filmmaker also wanting you to learn? 📺

[See additional ways the filmmakers used time-related elements to further enhance the movie-goers' understanding of the importance of time.](#)





# Culture Links

**M**ovies & Culture Report reader Jack Wheeler shared this link from the [July 2011 Washington Times: "Sure They Look Blue, but are The Smurfs Closet Reds?"](#) Hearing that *The Smurfs* are commies isn't new, but it's nice to see acknowledgement of it still pops up occasionally. Someone still recognizes communism is wrong.



In a textbook communist society, all citizens are equal. They labor for the common good. Money is unnecessary. Individual liberty takes a back seat to the needs of the collective. There is no God but the state.

Now, consider life in the Smurfs' village: Residents live in identical mushroom houses. Everyone dresses alike. They sing the same group song, over and over. They have no apparent deity.

More to the point, the Smurfs have no economy. Farmer Smurf doesn't peddle his crops to Wholesaler Smurf, who then marks them up for lucrative resale to Grocer and Baker Smurf. Nuh-uh. Farmer Smurf just farms, the better for the other Smurfs to eat at a communal table.

**A**s I'm sure everyone is by now aware, we, as citizens of these United States, will soon commemorate the tenth anniversary of the jihadist attacks on America.

In his Spring 2001 article *Muslims on the Silver Screen*—published only a few **months before the attacks** on the World Trade Center towers and the Pentagon—author Daniel Mandel wrote,

Does Hollywood dehumanize Muslims and Arabs? Many ... assert that racial and ethnic stereotyping, otherwise abandoned by the cinema, continues to apply to these groups. ... Hala Maksoud, president of the Arab American Anti-Discrimination Committee, in a complaint to NBC regarding an episode of the television series, *The West Wing*, asserts that "Arabs remain fair game for the entertainment industry in this country."

The result has been vigorous lobbying and public criticism to sensitize moviemakers to these distortions, then stop them. Faced with a barrage of criticism, the powers that be in Hollywood—who do not consider themselves qualified to test the validity of these complaints—usually concede to their critics. For example, *The Sum of All Fears*, a thriller by Tom Clancy, has as its villains a group of Muslim terrorists who conspire to detonate a nuclear device at the Superbowl in Denver. However, following objections from the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the director of the movie derived from the book, Phil Alden Robinson, substituted European neo-Nazis for Muslims. Robinson explained in a letter addressed to CAIR that he had "no intention of promoting negative images of Muslims or Arabs" and went on [to] wish the group his "best" in its efforts to combat discrimination. Evidently, the lobbying works. But are the complaints of bias valid? Does Hollywood treat Muslims and Arabs in an unfair fashion?

[Mr. Mandel studied the then-recent movies \*True Lies\*, \*Executive Decision\*, \*The Siege\*, \*Three Kings\*, and \*Rules of Engagement\* to determine whether or not the accusations were true.](#)





# How Hollywood Undermined Our Troops

by Scott Nehring

The average person living in the United States probably knows a military veteran but has never lived the regimented life of military personnel, never experienced the trials of war, yet most Americans feel they can accurately describe a soldier's life.

Average civilians believe they have a basic understanding of the horrors of battle. How could they know what it's like? Where does that knowledge come from? Our ideas about the military, about military procedures, even about war come from our entertainment.

The war-film genre can be traced back to *The Battle of Gettysburg* (1913) and the highly controversial film *Birth of a Nation* (1915). Since then hundreds of movies have been produced covering most of the wars fought by our military.

As with all film genres, war movies have lasting influence on public opinion. World War II and Vietnam have been the primary subjects of most war films; the Korean conflict and WWI remain relatively ignored.

**Any wonder the general public has greater knowledge of and interest in WWII and Vietnam than in other conflicts?**

Viewers who never experience combat learn about war from what's seen on screen—a constricted pathway of insight into the protections we are provided from enemies, foreign and domestic.

**You can change how the United States and the world remembers you.**

This narrow view explains why film's depictions of war have interested intelligence agencies since WWI.

Beginning in the 1930s, governments overtly and covertly produced documentaries intended to influence both servicemen and civilians. Wartime propaganda continued, unabated. Throughout WWII, the Roosevelt administration engaged Hollywood writers, producers, animators, and directors to create works intended to direct popular sentiments toward a government-approved opinion of our enemies and the need for collective, civilian sacrifice. This government-Hollywood relationship is seen in Frank Capra's *Why We Fight* films and in Looney Tunes cartoon shorts still seen today.

In the 1940s, stars like Jimmy Stewart and Henry Fonda actually joined military ranks to fight the Axis powers. Famous actors who served include Ted Knight (decorated for bravery five times), Medal of Honor winner Audie Murphy (*To Hell and Back*, 1955), Kirk Douglas, Lee Marvin, Paul Newman, Sidney Poitier, Rock Hudson, Charles Bronson, and Werner Klemperer, everyone's favorite Nazi, *Hogan's Heroes'* Colonel Klink (1965-71). These actors returned to America to star in films such as *The Glory Brigade* (1953), *Target Zero* (1955), and *In Harm's Way* (1965).

Then American culture changed in the 1960s and so did the relationship between the military and Hollywood. By the Vietnam era, productions which supported the military, not to mention actors who joined the service, were miniscule in comparison [*Anzio* (1968), *Battle of Britain* (1969)]. Productions from the '60s and '70s focused, not on the dangers in South Vietnamese jungles but on the burgeoning anti-war culture in the U. S. [*Greetings* (1968), *M\*A\*S\*H* (1970), *FTA Tour* (1975)].

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Vietnam veterans returned home to a populace critical of their sacrifice and soon realized they'd been marginalized by an entertainment industry which avoided depiction of returning soldiers onscreen but, instead, choose to question the role of the military in general [*Catch-22* (1970), *Johnny Got His Gun* (1971)]. Film portrayals of Vietnam veterans never celebrated their bravery, honor, or sacrifice.

The late 1970s and '80s witnessed Hollywood's concerted effort to cast the Vietnam veteran as a devastated psycho overcome by addictions and violence. The crazed-Vietnam-vet motif was used in *Taxi Driver* (1976), *The Deer Hunter* (1978), *Apocalypse Now* (1979), *Birdy* (1984), *The Park is Mine* (1986), *Lethal Weapon* (1987), and *Born on the 4th of July* (1989). The films *Platoon* (1986), *Full Metal Jacket* (1987), and *Casualties of War* (1989) focused directly on the conflict and portrayed American soldiers as prone to drug use, suicide, and irrational violence towards civilians and each other. Add the *Rambo* (1982-88) and *Missing in Action* (1984-85) series—where service men actually apologized for what we did overseas—and the image of the irrational, suicidal Vietnam veteran was firmly fixed in the imagination of popular culture.

The combative relationship between filmmakers and the military has continued and is replaying itself today. Operation Iraqi Freedom began March 20, 2003. The United States, Great Britain, and their allies invaded Iraq and toppled Saddam Hussein from power with only 21 days of major combat operations—an amazing feat. The build-up to the invasion of Iraq, however, witnessed strong opposition across world media, opposition which sprouted a cottage industry of anti-war documentaries [*Marooned in Iraq* (2002), *Uncovered: The Whole Truth About the Iraq War* (2003)].

**the image of the irrational, suicidal Vietnam veteran was firmly fixed in the imagination of popular culture**

Understand that a documentary filmmaker, even if well-intentioned, is subjective in his approach to his chosen topic and its presentation to his audience, even when he claims impartiality. The documentarian specifically chooses which footage to use, which angles to present, and what conclusions are made. The documentary may impress the viewer as honest—a “document” of the subject—but when the focus is foreign policy and war, the documentary moves beyond a casual investigation and becomes a tool to influence elections, policy, and the emotions of a populace. These productions are fully able to undermine our military in the field.

Through the early years of the Iraq War, numerous documentaries were produced with the sole purpose of influencing popular opinion against the Bush Administration and the Iraq War, itself. At first, anti-war documentaries appeared on Danish television with little play outside that country's borders [*I rævens hule - Saddams Irak* (2002), *Tilbage til Bagdad* (2003), and *Hjælp krigens ofre* (2003)]. By 2003, American and British filmmakers actively pushed an anti-Iraq War message, questioning the case for war. *Preventive Warriors* (2004), *Uncovered: The War on Iraq* (2004), *Rush to War* (2004), *Buried in the Sand: The Deception of America* (2004), and *Fahrenheit 9/11* (2004) popped up in theaters and on DVD across the country—just in time for the Presidential election of 2004.

Following the election, *The Blood of My Brother* (2005), *Iraq in Fragments* (2006), *Iraq for Sale: The War Profiteers* (2006), and *No End in Sight* (2007) continued the onslaught against a war they pictured as fueled by corporate greed and an out-of-control military which slaughtered innocents.

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These documentaries, while numerous, had limited audience and scope of influence, but they still laid important groundwork for a narrative which may ultimately, historically, define the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and those who fought them. These works of propaganda were released as opposition to the Bush Administration and became a *cause célèbre* for the celebrity class.

A-list actors such as Sean Penn, Tim Robbins, Woody Harrelson, and Susan Sarandon strongly, publicly condemned the action against Iraq and condemned the soldiers in the field. Woody Harrelson exclaimed to the foreign press that the U. S. military “dropping cluster bombs from 30,000 feet on a city is a cowardly act.”<sup>1</sup> Performers’ beliefs represented Hollywood’s larger anti-war sentiment which still permeates today’s entertainment and media industries, a fact proven by those industries’ excessive endorsement of Michael Moore’s factually troubled *Fahrenheit 9/11*.

But anti-war sentiments were not left to documentarians. Fictional accounts of Iraq and Afghanistan, indeed the War on Terror in general, poured into theaters. *Jarhead* (2005), though set during Desert Storm, depicted American marines as disenchanting and deeply troubled. *American Soldiers* (2005) had our men defy orders over the treatment of other soldiers. Throughout 2006 and '07 productions solidified the image of the out-of-control American military man rampaging through Iraq. *The Situation* (2006), *Battle for Haditha* (2007), *Rendition* (2007), and *Redacted* (2007) all show our servicemen murdering civilians with impunity. Combined with mainstream media’s obsession over abuses in Abu Gharib and debates over “enhanced interrogations” and brewing sectarian violence, these films shaped

**Like *Platoon* and *Full Metal Jacket* in the '80s, films praised by critics as fair depictions of our warriors continued to portray our military as nutcases.**

the mold for how media outlets around the world presented our men and women who served the cause of freedom.

In 2007, the troop surge insured progress in Iraq and evaporated predictions of both a violent civil war and the collapse of the Middle East—another amazing feat by our American military and their allies. But where was Hollywood’s depiction of the heroic efforts of our servicemen and women? Film producers, no longer able to beat the narrative drums proclaiming an out-of-control war, now changed focus to those veterans returning home.

Hollywood unveiled their familiar, crazed-Vietnam-vet motif, updated for a new generation of heroes. *Harsh Times* (2005), *In the Valley of Elah* (2007), *Stop-Loss* (2008), *The Lucky Ones* (2008), *The Messenger* (2009), and *Red White & Blue* (2010) depicted soldiers as bitter, violent, often psychotic. These films starred actors who openly, vocally opposed both the war and the men and women who fought. Our marines, soldiers, seamen, and airmen not only heard these performers insult them from the world’s *media* stage but saw themselves portrayed on screen by actors hostile to them and their mission.

Like *Platoon* and *Full Metal Jacket* in the '80s, films praised by critics as fair depictions of our warriors continued to portray our military as nutcases. *The Hurt Locker*, Best Picture in 2010, centered on Sergeant First Class William James (Jeremy Renner) and his EOD team. James is depicted as an adrenaline junkie unable to cope with the real world who sets himself on a self-destructive course and continues to endanger himself and his men with his wildly dangerous behavior. While *The Hurt Locker* contained brilliant film moments

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and was top-class filmmaking, it propelled forward the narrative that the American soldier is mentally disturbed and dangerous.

The continual flow of anti-military, anti-soldier films through the last decade is a serious cause for concern. Americans agree that freedom of speech is a national treasure; artists' liberty to speak is critical for the existence of our republic. But we must also consider the impact the artist has on those he speaks about. We, as a civilized culture, must realize that on-screen portrayals of our marines, seamen, airmen, and soldiers have a profound influence upon all who view them. At what point does an artist's freedom of speech move into the realm of aiding and abetting our enemy? At what point do the discussions of post-traumatic stress disorder and other serious issues faced by our returning military personnel become an attempt to malign and further damage these heroes and their cause?

Censorship of expression is a serious action and cannot even be hinted at lightly; but since the invasion of Iraq I have experienced, as a professional film reviewer, an onslaught of movies about our military and continual effort to derail the war and to cast those who serve in the worst possible light.


I do not believe these detractors should be silenced,  
but they must not be allowed to speak  
without the presence of a viable, potent response.

Military personnel must understand they have another war to fight: the battle for hearts and minds at home and around the world. How will history retell this era? What will be available

to future generations to explain that "conquer we must when our cause it is just." <sup>2</sup>

The previous decade has force-fed the American population a continual diet of negative propaganda about the war and about you. You and your family must set the record straight. The rest of us need you to respond to those vicious, negative portrayals with the truth only you can share.

Wars are won by learning the lessons of previous conflicts. As a film critic and grateful American, I urge you to learn the lesson of the Vietnam veteran. Tell your stories. Let your family, friends, neighbors, and community know about your experiences. Correct untruthful portrayals you see in the media.

Also consider countering the flood of films and documentaries with your own works depicting your own experiences. Use skills and resources available to you to shoulder cameras and begin to tell the real story of this war. Through networks and distribution on the internet, you can accurately paint your own portrait instead of allowing Hollywood to get away with painting their skewed picture. You can change how the United States and the world remember you. 

#### Endnotes

1. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/film/2002/oct/17/theatre.artsfeatures>. Accessed July 2011.
2. National Anthem of the United States of America, verse 4.





# At Rest

[Daniel 12:13](#)



## John O'Brien (?-2011)

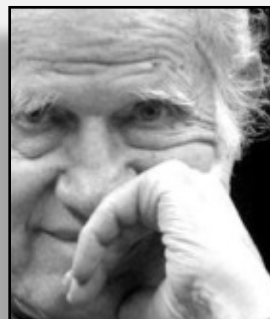
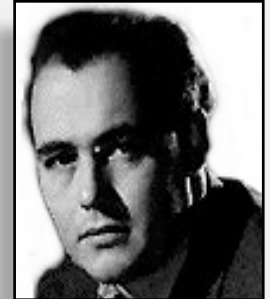
Composer

Best known for his sound tracks for *Iron Man*, *Iron Man 2*, *Pineapple Express*, *Nightwatch*, and *The Break-Up* for which he earned an ASCAP Film and Television award in 2007.

## Jimmy Sangster (1927-2011)

Screenwriter

One of the driving, creative forces behind the legendary Hammer Studios, this Welshman is best known for his works *Horror of Dracula*, *X: The Unknown*, *The Curse of Frankenstein*, *The Brides of Dracula*, *The Crawling Eye*, *The Revenge of Frankenstein*, and *Blood of the Vampire*. His autobiography is titled, *Do You Want It Good or Tuesday?*



## David Legrant (1927-2011)

Acting Coach

In his half-century of instruction in the craft, he mentored such actors as Tobey Maguire, Danny Glover, Carol Burnett, Bernadette Peters, Steve Martin, Walton Goggins, Alyson Hannigan, and Sara Gilbert. He told *Back Stage* magazine, "his style was to be 'gentle but demanding.' And when it came to the kind of students he liked, he summed it up by saying: 'People who are hungry. You can't cook for people who aren't hungry.'"





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# Information

Learn more about Story. Buy the book: [YouAreWhatYouSee.com](http://YouAreWhatYouSee.com).

Find Scott Nehring's latest film reviews: [GoodNewsFilmReviews.com](http://GoodNewsFilmReviews.com).

Scott is an award-winning screenwriter and film critic whose reviews have been published on a number of websites across the United States, Australia, and India including Reuters.com, USAToday.com, *The Chicago Times*, FoxNews.com, and a variety of local news stations across America.



As a former screenwriter, Scott is focused on balancing his love of story structure and cinema with his Christian faith. He loves to teach film studies to Christians, showing them how to read films and how to deal with the sometimes thorny subject of engaging modern culture.

Scott was co-founder of [Catholic Media Review](http://CatholicMediaReview.com). Current reviews can be found at [Good News Film Reviews](http://GoodNewsFilmReviews.com) and at [ChristianCinema.com](http://ChristianCinema.com).

Good News Film Reviews (GNFR) was established in June 2007 to discuss film and culture from a Christian perspective. From the first post onward, Scott has called for Christians to change both the way they view film and how they engage in culture. GNFR fell quiet following a short sabbatical, was re-launched in January 2008, and has been going strong since. GNFR is also home site for the Carnival of Cinema, a bi-weekly collection of film-related posts submitted from around the world. The Carnival of Cinema has been in operation since September 2006.

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