



Inventing Vietnam: The War in Film and Television (Culture And The Moving Image)

Michael Anderegg

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The Vietnam War has been depicted by every available medium, each presenting a message, an agenda, of what the filmmakers and producers choose to project about America's involvement in Southeast Asia. This collection of essays, most of which are previously unpublished, analyzes the themes, modes, and stylistic strategies seen in a broad range of films and television programs.

From diverse perspectives, the contributors comprehensively examine early documentary and fiction films, postwar films of the 1970s such as *The Deer Hunter* and *Apocalypse Now*, and the reformulated postwar films of the 1980s--*Platoon*, *Full Metal Jacket*, and *Born on the Fourth of July*. They also address made-for-television movies and serial dramas like *China Beach* and *Tour of Duty*. The authors show how the earliest film responses to America's involvement in Vietnam employ myth and metaphor and are at times unable to escape glamorized Hollywood. Later films strive to portray a more realistic Vietnam experience, often creating images that are an attempt to memorialize or to manufacture different kinds of myths. As they consider direct and indirect representations of the war, the contributors also examine the power or powerlessness of individual soldiers, the racial views presented, and inscriptions of gender roles. Also included in this volume is a chapter that discusses teaching Vietnam films and helping students discern and understand film rhetoric, what the movies say, and who they chose to communicate those messages.

Excerpt

Read an excerpt from Chapter 1 (pdf).

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Michael Anderegg is Professor of English at the University of North Dakota, and author of two other books: William Wyler and David Lean.

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