



# Hollywood War Machine: U.S. Militarism and Popular Culture

By Carl Boggs, Tom Pollard

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"Opinionated and witty." Terrell Carver, University of Bristol and author of Engels: A Very Short Introduction "A critical cultural chronicle of postwar American political history. Engaging and penetrating." Jan Nederveen Pieterse, University of Illinois In this unique book, the authors provide a hard-hitting, radical critique of the growing culture of American militarism, focusing on the post-Cold War years. Analyzed in historical context and drawing on a broad mix of theoretical, political, and cultural sources, The Hollywood War Machine explores the U.S. film industry and its deepening impact on the popular and political culture. Through the lens of filmmakers like Steven Spielberg, Michael Bay, Jonathan Mostow, Edward Zwick, Tony Scott, and John Woo, the volume deconstructs the narratives and images of nearly 200 combat and war-related movies, along with related consumer fare such as television and video games, in the context of the permanent war economy, security state, recurrent military interventions abroad, and the expansion of U.S. global power. Topics include cinematic representations of terrorism, the return of "good war" motifs, the phenomenon of disguised militarism, the relationship between cinema and technowar, depictions of the Gulf War and the current war in Iraq, and general media spectacles of warfare as well as unique perspectives on films related to World War II, the Cold War, and Vietnam.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"This politically informed book demonstrates how war movies are more than just entertainment. They serve--intentionally or not--as a cultural weapon of global empire. Clearly written, richly researched, and persuasively argued, *The Hollywood War Machine* is a feast for any opponent of militaristic propaganda."  
?Michael Parenti, author of *Superpatriotism* and *The Culture Struggle*

"From Tom Cruise in *Top Gun* (1986) down to *United 93* (2006), about the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Hollywood has played a crucial role in emplanting militarism, hypermasculinity, and racism deep in the American psyche. Carl Boggs and Tom Pollard's *The Hollywood War Machine* is an invaluable contribution to our understanding of American imperialism."

?Chalmers Johnson, author of *Blowback* and *The Sorrows of Empire*

"A critical cultural chronicle of postwar American political history. Engaging and penetrating. . . . It patiently relates the complicity of Hollywood in the culture of American militarism."

?Jan Nederveen Pieterse, University of Illinois and author of *Globalization and Culture: Global Mélange*

"Opinionated and witty. . . it has fizz."

?Terrell Carver, University of Bristol and author of *Engels: A Very Short Introduction*

"American intervention and empire since the Progressive Era have not come out of thin air. Instead their politics have been colonizing popular culture at the cinema in Westerns, sci-fi films, spy movies, and political thrillers for decades. Boggs and Pollard develop an excellent critical overview of how and why the military-industrial-entertainment complex has become so powerful during the 20th and 21st centuries in this wide-ranging study of American film. Reading *The Hollywood War Machine* helps us understand why many think violence is truly as American as apple pie."

?Timothy W. Luke, Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University

#### From the Publisher

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#### About the Author

**Carl Boggs** is Professor of Social Sciences at National University in Los Angeles, Adjunct Professor at Antioch University in Los Angeles, and author or editor of numerous books including *Imperial Delusions*:

*American Militarism and Endless War* (Rowman & Littlefield 2004) and *Masters of War: Militarism and Blowback in an Era of American Empire* (Routledge 2003).

**Tom Pollard** is Professor of Social Sciences at National University in San Jose and a documentary filmmaker whose work has appeared on BBC, the Discovery Channel, the Life Network, Canadian Broadcasting System, and various PBS channels. His most recent book is *Sex and Violence: The Hollywood Censorship Wars* (Paradigm, 2010) and he has coauthored with Carl Boggs *The Hollywood War Machine* (Paradigm, 2007) and *A World in Chaos: Social Crisis and the Rise of Postmodern Cinema* (Rowman & Littlefield 2003).

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