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## Analysis Of Eastwood's Film Flags Of Our Father

The American adaptation, *Flags of Our Father*, by Clint Eastwood based on a book written by James Bradley, delineates the crucial and costly battle of Iwo Jima. Eastwood's film follows the journey of the three US servicemen who raised the flag on Mount Suribachi and Joe Rosenthal who took the famous photograph of the raising of the flag. Clint Eastwood's portrayal of the battle on Iwo Jima had substantial numbers of accuracies, clearly showing that a thorough study has been done on the battle, contributing to the justification of why the film accumulated positive evaluations from critics. Even so, the film still contained minor shortcomings causing slight deviation from the actual reality of the battle that occurred on Iwo Jima. Many conflicting details that could be found between the actual battle and Eastwood's film, such as the roles of the African Americans in the battle of Iwo Jima, the raising of the flag alongside the representation of warfare and combat and *The War Bonds* tour itself.

Clint Eastwood's decision to not sufficiently take into account African Americans and their roles within the war, relegating them to the background, thus created a heated discussion on whether he's judgment was accurate. Despite there being nearly 900 African Americans who fought the battle of Iwo Jima, in Eastwood's film, not a single African-American was present, even though it is evident through historic documents that African-Americans did indeed attend the campaign. Spike Lee criticized Eastwood's work for ignoring the presence of African Americans in the Battle of Iwo Jima. Lee goes on to say that "there was not one Negro actor on the screen," referring to how in Eastwood's "version of Iwo Jima, Negro soldiers did not exist". However Eastwood can be excused of this matter since the primary focal point of the movie is the flag bearers, and in history, the initial raising of the flag did not involve a single African-American. This was later confirmed to be true when a confirmed list of flag bearers came out. Eastwood's decision to not include any African American in the scene of the flag-raising creates a greater and more accurate representation of history. But this does not change the reality of the matter that African-Americans did play a role in the battle of Iwo Jima. Although the African American soldiers were restricted from front line combat duty and were only relegated to support roles, they still held essential noncombat roles, they would unload and transport ammunition to the front lines, bury the bodies of dead soldiers and assist in defensive actions. In spite of the fact that African-Americans only had auxiliary roles they were still indeed present in the war, nevertheless, Eastwood's depiction of other scenes was accurately portrayed. Therefore, Eastwood's decision to not have any African-Americans present in the film creates some inconsistencies in history but overall his work was accurate.

The portrayal of the flag raising was very accurate and remained faithful to the actual events showing no obvious disparities. The depiction of events on Mount Suribachi was extremely

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accurate and stayed as close as possible to the historical events on Mount Suribachi. In the film, he had sure to include to depict two flag-raising, and Joe Rosenthal only arriving after the first was already raised. It was evident that Eastwood did a thorough research when he paid close attention to the fact that during the time of the photograph many people speculated that the raising of the flag was staged. This was one of the major controversies surrounding the Battle of Iwo Jima, and a popular one that the photo was arranged to boost the sales of war bonds. Overall, the depiction raising of the flag was very accurate and stayed very close to the historic events of Iwo Jima providing a great deal of depth.

Eastwood provides a somewhat misrepresentation of the battle with some smaller insignificant changes with some combat details and how the fight occurred on Iwo Jima. Eastwood displays how the Japanese soldiers made use of their bunkers waiting for the U.S soldiers to walk into close vicinity before taking fire. This was true in the fact that the Japanese soldiers did use this tactic and the representation of the tactic was accurately portrayed. However, he forgot to demonstrate the use of the long defensive tunnels that the Japanese used in the battle, although this is not an extremely important detail it still demonstrates an inaccuracy. The tunnels reached to about a little over 18 km and were dug out by the Japanese forces which proved extremely important for the Japanese, this was clear when an American Commander said "Miles of interlocking caves, concrete blockhouses and pillboxes proved to be one of the most impenetrable defenses encountered by the Marines in the Pacific"(Admiral Nimitz, 2017). Nonetheless, Eastwood did not explore the tunnels in-depth, barely displaying the depth of the tunnels, not properly giving the viewers a genuine representation of the use and depth of the tunnels. Smaller minor details like the length of the bombardment on the island of Iwo Jima, in the movie there were "20 straight days of bombing", however in actuality, there was a little over 5 weeks of continuous bombings. An accurate detail that Eastwood included was when Schmidt requested for "10 days of shelling" and he was only given "three", this did happen during the Battle of Iwo Jima, Schmidt did indeed request for 10 days of shelling and was denied only receiving 3 days instead. Ergo, Eastwood demonstrated many aspects of the battle some of the tactics stayed true to the historic event and others were inaccurately represented.

In conclusion, the film *Flags of our Fathers* by Clint Eastwood had many accurate historical details but the film also took some creative liberties when it came to some minor historic details. The controversy on the role of African Americans where Spike Lee pointed out some inaccuracies within the movie, but this controversy also shows Eastwood's thorough research. However, when it comes to the portrayal of the battle on Iwo Jima demonstrates many accuracies as well as many other mistakes, but when it comes to most scenes ultimately he created a very accurate film that closely followed the events in history with only some minor historic liberties.

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