



James Bradley

Flags of Our Fathers

By James Bradley



John "Doc" Bradley
Navy Corpsman and
father of the author



Flag Raising on Iwo Jima
February 23, 1945



Ira Hayes
U.S. Marine Corporal



Rene Gagnon
U.S. Marine Corporal

*"Among the men who
fought on Iwo Jima,
uncommon valor was
a common virtue."*

– Admiral Chester Nimitz



Michael Strank
U.S. Marine Sergeant
Squad Leader



Franklin Sousley
U.S. Marine PFC



Harlon Block
U.S. Marine Corporal

Page created by Jana Comerford,
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James Bradley's fascinating World War II non-fiction book *Flags of Our Fathers* follows six ordinary Americans—"boys," as Bradley calls them—who fought in the Battle of Iwo Jima, one of the bloodiest, most brutal military engagements in American history. The enemy, the Japanese Imperial Army, was known for extreme cruelty and fanatical devotion to the Emperor. Japanese soldiers—and even Japanese civilians—were expected to fight to the death rather than surrender.

Out of the incredible carnage of this conflict came one of the most widely reproduced photographs in world history, *The Flag Raising at Iwo Jima, February 23, 1945*, taken by Joseph Rosenthal of the Associated Press. Only three of the six flag-raisers survived the battle, including James Bradley's father, John Henry "Doc" Bradley. The power of the photograph was recognized immediately, and the lives of the three survivors changed forever. *Flags of our Fathers* describes James Bradley's quest to find out more about the traumatic experience that his father almost never discussed.

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Author : James Bradley



James Bradley, son of flag-raiser John Bradley, is the author of two additional books.

Flyboys is about an incident in which eight captured American airmen were beheaded by the Japanese. One flyboy, young Navy pilot George Herbert Walker Bush, escaped and later was elected president of the United States. (Read [transcript](#) of CNN interview with the former president about his experience.) (See [New York Times review](#) of book.)

The Imperial Cruise describes actions by President Theodore Roosevelt that ultimately led to the attack on Pearl Harbor. (See [New York Times review](#).)

- [Author information from Random House, publisher of *Flags of Our Fathers*](#)
- [Bradley's autobiographical narrative from his Web site, JamesBradley.com](#)
- [JamesBradley.com](#). Author's Web site.
- [Publisher's Page on *Flags of Our Fathers*](#). Random House.

The American Media's Portrayal of the Japanese

Moeller, S. (1996). [Pictures of the enemy: Fifty years of Images of Japan in the American press, 1941-1992](#). *Journal of American Culture*, 19(1). Retrieved from MasterFILE Premier library database.

This article traces how the American press portrayed the Japanese over 50 years. The Japanese have typically been portrayed stereotypically as “other,” “unique,” and sometimes as savage animals. After its defeat in World War II, Japan began to Westernize, and the American press portrayed the Japanese more favorably. However, when Japan prospered to the point of becoming a rival to the U.S., old hostilities re-emerged. Many Americans believed Japan was trying to defeat the U.S. in the economic realm. In fact, many saw Japan as the *most serious threat* to the U.S. Although Japanese-Americans were viewed with deep suspicion during World War II, they have not been viewed this way in recent times. This article was published in 1996, so developments since then are not included. However, the article is still of interest today. *AC Online login required*.

America's Presidents During World War II



Franklin D. Roosevelt
President 1933-1945

President Roosevelt died less than three weeks after the Battle of Iwo Jima. It was his idea to use the flag raisers to raise money for war bonds.

- [Official White House Biography](#).
- [Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum](#).



Harry S. Truman
President 1945-1953

President Truman hosted the flag raisers at the White House.

- [Official White House Biography](#)

- [Harry S. Truman Library and Museum](#)
- [Hiroshima: Harry Truman's Diary and Papers](#)

Battle of Iwo Jima (February 19 – March 26, 1945)

- [Battle of Iwo Jima](#). Overview from AC Library's database, Student Resource Center. *AC Online login required*. **Public domain photo at right** shows assault on Iwo Jima.
- [Battle for Iwo Jima, 1945](#), from the Navy Department Library. Lots of information about all aspects of Iwo Jima, including the battle itself.
- [Iwo Jima: A Remembrance](#). From Military.com. By Cyril J. O'Brien. **Excerpt:** "As General James L. Jones, 32nd Commandant of the Marine Corps, said, 'The valor and sacrifice of the Marines and Sailors who fought on Iwo Jima is, today and forever, the standard by which we judge what we are and what we might become.'"
- ["The War."](#) This page contains photos and information about the Battle of Iwo Jima from the PBS documentary "The War" produced by noted documentarian Ken Burns.
- ["Worth the Cost? Justification of the Iwo Jima Invasion."](#) **Author information:** "Marine Capt. Robert S. Burrell has taught history at the U.S. Naval Academy. His published research on Iwo Jima won awards from the Society of Military History, the Naval Historical Foundation, the Naval Historical Center, and the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation. This article is adapted from his book *The Ghosts of Iwo Jima* (Texas A&M University Press, 2006) and appeared in the Winter 2007 issue of *MHQ* (Vol. 19, No. 2, p. 49)."



Code Breakers and Navajo Code Talkers

- ["American Cryptanalysts Successfully Cracked the Japanese Diplomatic Code Known as *Purple*."](#) **Abstract:** "Presents how the Japanese diplomatic code was deciphered by American cryptanalysis during the second World War. Why the Japanese covered dispatches with cryptic shields in 1937; Importance of deciphering the Japanese code; Devices for coding systems." AC Online login required.
- [Army Code Talkers](#). The Navajo code talks received the most attention, but men from other tribes also served. Tribes mentioned in this article are the Cheyenne, Comanche, Cherokee, Osage and Yankton Sioux.
- [Navajo Code Talkers](#). "At Iwo Jima, Major Howard Connor, 5th Marine Division signal officer, declared, '**Were it not for the Navajos, the Marines would never have taken Iwo Jima.**' Connor had six Navajo code talkers working around the clock



during the first two days of the battle. Those six sent and received over 800 messages, all without error. The Japanese, who were skilled code breakers, remained baffled by the Navajo language. The Japanese chief of intelligence, Lieutenant General Seizo Arisue, said that while they were able to decipher the codes used by the U.S. Army and Army Air Corps, they never cracked the code used by the Marines.” From U.S. Navy Web site.

- [The Wider View: Nazi Codebreakers Which Shortened the Second World War by Two Years.](#) This brief article features amazing photographs of the replica of British code breaking machines used during World War II. The large, complicated machines, built by brilliant mathematician Alan Turing, were part mechanical and part electronic and were the forerunners of today’s computers.

Critical Thinking Exercises (Various Issues of World War II)

What is critical thinking?

Many definitions of critical thinking are available. Below is a useful definition by Dr. Norman Herr, Professor of Science Education, California State University at Northridge:

“Critical thinkers draw conclusions only after they have defined their terms, *distinguished fact from opinion, asked relevant questions, made detailed observations, and uncovered assumptions*. Critical thinkers make assertions based on *solid evidence* and *sound logic*. Critical thinkers:

“Rely on evidence

- examine problems carefully
- ask pertinent questions
- identify assumptions and biases
- define criteria
- look for evidence
- identify missing information”

“Rely on logic

- assess statements and arguments
- analyze data
- consider a variety of explanations
- reject information that is incorrect or irrelevant
- admit a lack of understanding or information when necessary
- suspend judgment until all facts have been gathered and considered
- weigh evidence, and draw reasoned conclusions
- adjust opinions when new facts are found”

The above content is from [Internet Resources to Accompany The Sourcebook for Teaching Science](#). “Critical Thinking” page. The site also includes the [elements of critical thinking](#).

Critical Thinking Activities

- [**The Constitution on Trial: The Internment of the Japanese during World War II.**](#) An interesting and information-packed lesson plan that teaches how to use primary documents to examine historical incidents.
- [**Posters.**](#) This site contains World War II posters that can provide material for discussion. How would today's Americans react? Also see [**Poster Art of WWII**](#) from the Truman Library (has activities).
- [**Tokyo Rose: Villain or Victim?**](#)



"Tokyo Rose" is widely thought of as a notorious female Japanese radio announcer who attempted to damage the morale of Allied service personnel with her broadcasts. (These attempts were mostly unsuccessful.) Surprisingly enough, the woman charged after the war with being Tokyo Rose was a Japanese-American zoology graduate of the University of California in Los Angeles. She had been trapped in Japan helping an ill relative when the war broke out. This cover-story article from *American History* magazine tells the tragic story of Iva Toguri d'Aquino. Officials found that there may have been no single individual who was "Tokyo Rose." Was d'Aquino's imprisonment justified? *AC Online login required.*



- [**Truman Diary and Papers.**](#) What factors did President Truman consider in making the decision to use the atomic bomb? Was he right?

The Forties in America

Student Resource Center Gold, an AC library database, contains essays on various aspects of culture by decade. The war and its aftermath had many effects on American life, and **this section has something for almost everyone!** *AC Online login required for these essays.*

Some of these essays have audio.

This database has other topics relating to the 1940s and World War II, but some of them do not have permanent links so that they could be posted here. Call 371-5403 for help if you are interested in a topic not included here.

- [**1940s Era Overview.**](#) America becomes a global power.
- [**African-Americans and the Military: War War II and Segregation.**](#) The Army Air Force. Movement towards equality in the ranks.
- [**America at War: The War at Home.**](#) The public prepares. Mobilization. Economic conversion. Subduing labor. Rationing. Labor during the war. Rosie the Riveter.
- [**Architectural Influences.**](#) Adapting Modernism to America. The glass wall. Miesian architecture. Functionalism goes to war. Industrial architecture. Prefabricated houses. The birth of Suburbia.

- [Arts](#). Modernism. Hollywood. Abstract impressionism. War narratives. The publication of Richard Wright's *Native Son* in 1940 was a significant advancement for black writers.
- [Automobile Design](#). America's production capacity was an essential factor in the Allied victory. After the war the car companies were eager to cater to consumers, including returning service personnel. Stylistic and mechanical advances are described.
- [Business: Mobilization for World War II](#). Impact of war. Bureaucracy. Rationing. Shortages and scrap. Boom. Recovery.
- [The Churches and World War II](#). Activism. Toward war. After Pearl Harbor. The home front. War, faith, and nationalism.
- [Computer Science and Technology](#). Early computers were employed in the war effort.
- [Drama](#). During the war audiences wanted spectacles and musicals. After the war the focus went to the family and the individual. Playwrights Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller emerged.
- [Fiction](#). The social realism engendered by the Great Depression of the 1930s was winding to an end in 1939 with the publication of John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*. European Modernism was ascending, with an emphasis on the individual. Important war novels were written, including Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead*. African-American author Richard Wright published his classic novel, *Native Son*.
- ["Home Front."](#) This cover story article from *American History* magazine provides a comprehensive look at life in the United States during the war and the sacrifices made by civilians.
- [The Male Experience \(1940s\)](#). Topics are manhood and service, the rush to the altar, the military family, separation, wartime trauma, postwar expectations, family life.
- [Propaganda, News, and Censorship](#). Sample topics are propaganda, the CBS style, censorship and the war, dangers of censorship, voluntary censorship, and editorials.
- [Race Relations](#). Sample topics are treatment of Japanese Americans, rising black expectations, blacks in the military, race riots in the cities, racism discredited, and governmental response.

The Greatest Generation

"By then I had come to understand what this generation of Americans meant to history. It is, I believe, the greatest generation any society has ever produced."

– Tom Brokaw

Tom Brokaw, author of *The Greatest Generation*: "By then, I had come to understand what this generation of Americans meant to history. It is, I believe, the greatest generation any society has ever produced. . . . At a time in their lives when their days and nights should have been filled with innocent adventure, love, and the lessons of the workaday world, they were fighting in the most primitive conditions possible across the bloodied landscape of France, Belgium, Italy, Austria, and the coral islands of the Pacific. They answered the call to save the world from the two most powerful and ruthless military machines ever assembled, instruments of conquest in the hands of fascist maniacs.

“They faced great odds and a late start, but they did not protest. They succeeded on every front. They won the war; they saved the world. They came home to joyous and short-lived celebrations and immediately began the task of rebuilding their lives and the world they wanted. They married in record numbers and gave birth to another distinctive generation, the Baby Boomers. A grateful nation made it possible for more of them to attend college than any society had ever educated, anywhere. They gave the world new science, literature, art, industry, and economic strength unparalleled in the long curve of history. As they now reach the twilight of their adventurous and productive lives, they remain, for the most part, exceptionally modest. They have so many stories to tell, stories that in many cases they have never told before, because in a deep sense they didn't think that what they were doing was that special, because everyone else was doing it too.”

Note: The AC Library has this book in its loan collection on the fourth floor of the Washington Street Campus library. The call number is 940.54 B867. Do not hesitate to ask the staff for help if needed. Current, valid public library cards from Harrington Library Consortium (HLC) libraries are accepted. Most of the libraries in the Panhandle belong to HLC. Call 371-5400 if you have questions about library cards or books.

Hirohito: Japan's Controversial Emperor



[American Experience: Hirohito \(1901-1989\)](#)

A concise biography from PBS.

[Biography of Emperor Hirohito.](#) From *The Encyclopedia of World Biography*.

[“The ‘Cunning’ Hirohito.”](#)

Review of *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan* by Herbert P. Bix. **Excerpt:** “A devastating new biography counters Japan's long-held view of the emperor as a reluctant warrior.” *AC Online login required.*

“The ties between Us and Our people have always stood on mutual trust and affection. They do not depend upon mere legends and myths. They are not predicated on the false conception that the Emperor is divine, and that the Japanese people are superior to other races and fated to rule the world.”

—Emperor Hirohito on January 1, 1946
([after](#) the war)

[“A God Dethroned.”](#)

Review of *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan* by Herbert P. Bix. *Economist* (9 February 2000). Retrieved from AC Library's database, MasterFILE Premier. Was Hirohito a shy, retiring scientist as he is sometimes described, or was he an enthusiastic promoter of the war? *AC Online login required.*

[“Hirohito: Broad-Minded Benevolence.”](#)

By Ellen Bailey. *Hirohito*. (2006). Retrieved from AC Library's database, MasterFILE Premier. *AC Online login required.*

[“Showa Scholar Supreme.”](#) Interview in *The Japan Times Online*

with Herbert P. Bix, author of *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*. Bix discusses the controversy surrounding Hirohito's role in the war.

Iwo Jima Commanders



[General Holland "Howlin' Mad" Smith.](#)

Biography from U.S. Marine Corps History Division.

Sometimes called "the father of modern U.S. amphibious warfare." Smith described his command philosophy in his 1949 book, *Coral and Brass*: "Since I first joined the Marines, I have advocated aggressiveness in the field and constant offensive action. Hit quickly, hit hard and keep right on hitting. Give the enemy no rest, no opportunity to consolidate his forces and hit back at you." Quote from book jacket: "One of the most important, picturesque and controversial figures of World War II, "Howlin' Mad" Smith here tells his story - and the story of the Marine Corps' magnificent achievement in the war with Japan."

"This will be the bloodiest fight in Marine Corps history. We'll catch seven kinds of hell on the beaches, and that will be just the beginning. The fighting will be fierce, and the casualties will be awful, but my Marines will take the damned island. (concerning the upcoming attack on Iwo Jima).

-Gen. Holland Smith

"Holland M. Smith was the father of amphibious warfare and laid the groundwork for American landing operations throughout the Pacific in World War II. He earned the nickname 'Howlin' Mad' on account of his ferocity in training, battle, and in dealing with his subordinates." [History and the Headlines.](#) Department of Defense. ABC CLIO Schools.

[Biography from The Pacific War Online Encyclopedia.](#)



[General Tadamichi Kuribayashi](#)

"In Lieutenant General Tadamichi Kuribayashi, the Americans faced one of the most formidable opponents of the war. A fifth-generation *samurai*, hand-picked and personally extolled by the Emperor, Kuribayashi combined combat experience with an innovative mind and an iron will." From Marine Corps History and Museums Division "Marines in World War II Commemorative Series." By Col. Joseph H. Alexander.

"The United States is the last country in the world Japan should fight."

- Gen. Kuribayashi in a letter to his wife

[Biography](#) from World War II Database.

["His Emperor's Reluctant Warrior."](#) Translated from *The Japan Times*.

Fascinating 2006 article by David McNeill about General Kuribayashi, who tried to persuade his superiors not to fight the United States based on what he had learned about America and its people during the years he lived here. He had served as military attaché in both Canada and the United States. He spoke English fluently, read Shakespeare, and had driven alone across the United States observing the American people and learning about their character and resources.

Iwo Jima Island



“An ugly lump of volcanic sand and clay.” "At dawn on D-Day Marines saw Iwo Jima for the first time. It was unlike any other island they had ever seen. Instead of palm trees and a white ribbon of beach which had first met their gaze at Roi–Namur, or the green cane fields of Saipan and Tinian, they saw an ugly lump of volcanic sand and clay, which was treeless, craggy, and blistered with endless sand hummocks. Mount Suribachi, at the southern tip, loomed like something out of an inferno; the plateau at the north was a series of ridges and hills, although little of its really hazardous character could be appreciated from the ships.... The beach was not white, but black, and the vegetation which grew sparsely, was wilted, burned out, colorless. It was as if, prophetically, Iwo was meant to support not life, but death." From *The Fourth Marine Division in World War II*, written by David K. Dempsey and edited by Carl W. Proehl. Washington: Infantry Journal Press, 1946.



Strategic importance: “Iwo Jima's importance lay not in the objectives of the navy or army, but in the American strategic bombing campaign. The B-29 ‘Superfortress,’ the first long-range bomber, had been flying missions against Japan since the fall of the Marianas in 1944. Possession of Iwo Jima, which hosted three airfields, would provide a base for fighter escorts. Furthermore, it would neutralize the island's role as a base for

bomber interceptors and forward warning station. As preparations for the invasion of Okinawa were moving ahead, the order was given to take Iwo Jima.” From “Battle of Iwo Jima,” AC Library’s Student Resource Center database. *AC Online login required.* ([Read the rest of the article.](#))

Importance of Iwo Jima from “Marine Corps History 1740-1990”

[Heart of Texas Young Marines:](#) **Excerpt about Iwo Jima:** “The Nation will never know the number of bomber air crews this tiny island saved. Without Iwo Jima, bombing of the Japanese home islands would perhaps have extracted a prohibitive price. Both the Marines and certainly the Japanese knew the value of this desolate, forbidding mound of volcanic sand and rock. Each fought intensely; one side to guard its Empire and the other to extinguish that Empire.”



Photo at left: The USS Texas “lent gunfire support and anti-aircraft fire to the landings on Iwo Jima and Okinawa.” From [Historic Naval Ships Association](#) Web site. [Click here](#) to see a beautiful color print of USS Texas firing on Mt. Suribachi!

Iwo Jima Memorial (U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial)



Marine Corp Memorial with
Washington DC in the distance

Photo by D.B. King

This file is licensed under the Creative
Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic license.



At left: [The National Iwo Jima Memorial Monument](#) in Connecticut honors all the service personnel who died in the battle—not just the Marines. It is also based on the Rosenthal photograph but was created by a different sculptor, Joseph Petrovics (Wikimedia Commons photograph).

[Oral Interview History](#) with Felix de Weldon (Memorial sculptor) from the Harry S. Truman Library and Museum. **Excerpt:** “When I saw the picture of the Iwo Jima flag raising, actually, on the same deadline as the flag raising took place, I was so deeply impressed by its significance, its meaning, that I imagined that it would arouse the imagination of the American people to show the forward drive, the unison of action, the will to sacrifice, the relentless determination of these young men. Everything was embodied in that picture. At that time I asked Commander Clark if I could discontinue for a few days the work on the battle of the Coral Sea and make a model. And he said to go right ahead. That was a Friday. I worked all Friday night, all Saturday, part of Saturday night, all Sunday and by Monday morning the model was completed.”

Japanese Attitude Towards Surrender

"To the horror of American troops advancing on Saipan, they saw mothers clutching their babies hurling themselves over the cliffs rather than be taken prisoner."

- By David Powers. "Japan: No Surrender in World War Two." BBC. 2007. Web.

"Japan: No Surrender in World War Two."

By David Powers. BBC.

BBC correspondent David Powers sheds some light on why the Japanese were willing to fight to the death: "They were indoctrinated from an early age to revere the Emperor as a living deity, and to see war as an act that could purify the self, the nation, and ultimately the whole world. Within this framework, the supreme sacrifice of life itself was regarded as the purest of accomplishments." [Read the rest of the article.](#)

"The Soldiers Who Would Not Surrender."

By Mark Felton. *World War II*. Nov. 2003. Retrieved from Academic Search Complete database.



Many Japanese soldiers did not surrender after the War ended. Felton focuses on two of these soldiers in particular. Yokoi Shochoi, who surrendered in 1972, wished to return his rifle to the Emperor and apologize. He said, "I am sorry I did not serve His Majesty to my satisfaction." However, Emperor Hirohito would not see him. In 1991, Hirohito's son, Emperor granted Shochoi an audience. Yokoi apologized for not having served the Japanese Imperial Army well enough and was "overcome by emotion" (Felton). In 1974 2nd Lt. Hiroo Onoda would not surrender until ordered to do so by his commanding officer, who did indeed meet with him and order him to surrender. **The public domain photo at left shows Onoda as a young man.** [Read the rest of the article.](#) *AC login required.*

"Surrender." Pacific War Online Encyclopedia.

Excerpt: "The Allied attitude was based on the Roman doctrine of just war that was inherited and modified by the Christian West. Under this doctrine, the purpose of a just war was not to physically annihilate the enemy, but to impose one's will on him. Unnecessary killing and destruction were to be avoided. . . . To the Japanese Army of the Pacific War, operating under a twisted version of the ancient Bushido code, surrender was unthinkable. The most honorable fate for a warrior was to die while taking many enemies with him (as with the kamikazes.) Ordinary death in battle was the next most honorable fate, while suicide was the preferred alternative to surrender" (Pacific War Online Encyclopedia). [Read the rest of the article.](#) Pacific War Online Encyclopedia. © 2006-2009 by Kent G. Budge.

Japanese-Americans Put in Internment Camps



[Internment of Japanese-Americans](#). Excerpt: "During World War II the U.S. government forcibly relocated 120,000 Japanese immigrants and their descendants from their homes on the West Coast because it feared they could aid the Japanese war effort. More than 60 percent of those affected were U.S. citizens. Approximately ten thousand people were relocated to cities in the interior of the United States, while the remainder were resettled in internment camps." **Evacuees shown at left in public domain photograph.** From AC Library's Student Resource Center database. *AC Online login required.*

Japanese Culture

[Japanese lifestyle](#). Information about many aspects of Japanese culture with emphasis on modern Japan.

[Japanese Imperial Army](#) (soldier shown at right in public domain photograph). An interview with historian Edward J. Drea about his book, *Japan's Imperial Army: Its Rise and Fall, 1853-1945*. Drea is an expert on the history of Japanese military affairs. On Historynet.com.



Marines



[Marine Corps description of esprit de corps](#):

"One of the factors which constitute morale, is the loyalty to, pride in, and enthusiasm for the unit shown by its members. Whereas morale refers to the Marine's attitude, esprit de corps is the unit spirit. It is the common spirit reflected by all members of a unit and provides group solidarity. It implies devotion and loyalty to the unit and all for which it stands, and a deep regard for the unit's history, traditions, and honor. Esprit de corps is the unit's

personality and expresses the unit's will to fight and win in spite of seemingly insurmountable odds. Esprit de corps depends on the satisfaction the members get from belonging to a unit, their attitudes toward other members of the unit, and confidence in their leaders. True esprit de corps is based on the great military virtues such as unselfishness, self-discipline, duty, energy, honor, patriotism, and courage. Idleness is the curse of military life and kills esprit." **This description is from a Corporal NCO Program handout for a leadership course at the Marine University (January 1999). It is posted on the Camp Pendleton Web site. Click the link to read the rest of the document.**

"You cannot exaggerate about the Marines. They are convinced to the point of arrogance, that they are the most ferocious fighters on earth—and the amusing thing about it is that they are."

- Father Kevin Keaney, 1st MarDiv Chaplain, Korean War

[Marines. The Few. The Proud.](#) Official Marine Corps Web site.

[Marine Corps Overview.](#) Information of the Marines.

["Sacred Sand is Reminder of the Past."](#) Abstract:

"Discusses the practice of the US Marines at the Marine Corps Base in Camp Lejeune, North Carolina in giving a bottle of sand from Iwo Jima to anyone

who reaches the rank of a corporal. How the bottles of sand gives motivation to marines; Importance of tradition to the marines." From AC Library's MasterFILE Premier database. *AC Online login required.*

[World War II Gallery of the National Museum of the Marine Corps.](#)

[A WWII Marine.](#) Excerpt. "A composite picture of the average Marine during the Second World War would be a nineteen-year-old who entered the Corps between 1941 and 1945. He was Caucasian, five-feet-nine inches tall, and weighed about 140 pounds. He most often came from the rural south or the urban north, had two-to-four siblings, a father and mother at home, where the father remained the primary breadwinner. Marines were mostly Protestant, but Catholics were almost equally represented. They did not drink, smoke, or display tattoos. Most of them had spent very little time away from home. Of course, there were both seasoned veterans and newly-recruited Marines, sixteen-year-olds who lied about their age shared the rank of PFC with thirty-four-year old men." By Laura Lacey, **Sixth Marine Division Association Historian.**

Medal of Honor



U.S. Navy Medal of Honor
photographed about
1945.
U.S. Naval Historical
Center.

"The Medal of Honor is the highest award for valor in action against an enemy force that can be given to an individual serving in the Armed Services of the United States. Although originally awarded for both combat and non-combat heroism, the Medal of Honor today is presented for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life, above and beyond the call of duty." **U.S. Naval Academy definition.** (This medal is sometimes erroneously called the "Congressional Medal of Honor.")

"[The Battle of Iwo Jima] was America's most heroic battle. More medals for valor were awarded for action on Iwo Jima than in any battle in the history of the United States. To put that into perspective: The Marines were awarded eighty-four Medals of Honor in World War II. Over four years, that was twenty-two a year, about two a month. But in just one month of fighting on this island, they were awarded twenty-seven Medals of Honor: one-third their accumulated total." James Bradley, *Flags of Our Fathers*, p. 16.

Media Coverage of World War II

Ernie Pyle, War Correspondent.

“Ernie Pyle.” Excerpt. “[Pyle was] Arguably the most famous newspaperman of the century, certainly the most-read correspondent of World War II, . . . Pyle's dispatches were so peppered with intimate details of life at the front that readers came to understand a great deal about how soldiers - particularly infantrymen - lived there, and sometimes how they died there. Half a century later, Pyle's war writing still breathes like an intimate conversation, still serves as a bridge across time and space, linking generations in an experience of the unthinkable: a global war.” By David Nichols for *Editor & Publisher*. (Oct 30, 1999): 34. Retrieved from AC Library database *Student Resource Center - Gold*. AC login required.



“[Pyle was] best remembered for his vivid descriptions of the human spirit in the face of the brutality and pathos of war.” – Clyde McDonnell

“The Death of Captain Waskow.” This poignant column is Pyle best-known work from the war. It is a true story and is may remind readers of the flag-raisers’ feelings for their leader, Michael Strank. This column demonstrates Pyle’s genius for writing about the “common soldier” that accounts for the wide readership and acclaim he achieved. He was killed instantly when a Japanese bullet struck his head while he was in a foxhole with infantry soldiers during the Battle of Okinawa.

Newsreels



During World War II movie theaters often ran short news reels before the main feature to provide war updates for their audiences. News reels faded away after television became more widespread during the 1950s.

Source: PBS.org. “The War,” produced by Ken Burns. Photo from Library of Congress.



“Marines Raise Flag over Iwo Jima – 1945” Newsreel. American audiences watched brief news films in movie theaters. This film produced by the Office for Emergency Management, Office of War Information, and made available by the National Archives features other aspects of the war in addition to the Battle of Iwo Jima and the flag raising. (10 min. 36 sec.)

Movies

Official Movie Site for *Flags of Our Fathers*. Directed by Clint Eastwood.

Official Movie Site for *Letters from Iwo Jima*. Directed by Clint Eastwood. From perspective of Japanese soldiers who fought at Iwo Jima.

"An Old Song"

Read the poem below. Do you think it offers any insight into the Japanese warrior mentality? Could it be making a statement about war and soldiers in general? It was written by a prominent Yiddish-language Lithuanian-born poet whose pen name was Yehoash.

An Old Song

by Yehoash (Solomon Blumgarten, 1870-1927)

Translated by Marie Syrkin.

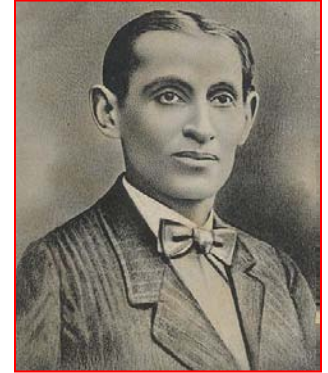
In the blossom-land Japan
Somewhere thus an old song ran.

Said a warrior to a smith
"Hammer me a sword forthwith.
Make the blade
Light as wind on water laid.
Make it long
As the wheat at harvest song.
Supple, swift
As a snake, without rift,
Full of lightning, thousand-eyed!
Smooth as silken cloth and thin
As the web that spiders spin.
And merciless as pain, and cold."

"On the hilt what shall be told?"

"On the sword's hilt, my good man,"
Said the warrior of Japan,
"Trace for me
A running lake, a flock of sheep
And one who sings her child to sleep."

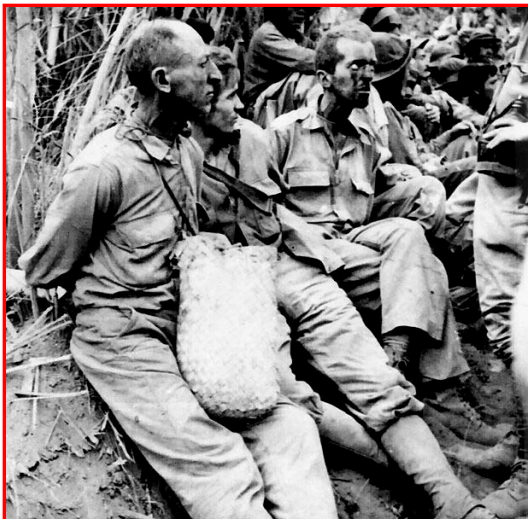
From [Aikido East](#) Web site. 4 June 2010.



Yehoash

Pacific War

[Bataan Death March](#). Description of horrific ordeal undergone by U.S. prisoners of war held by the Japanese. The Bataan Death March has gone down in history as one of the most notorious examples of cruel treatment of prisoners of war. (See [Wikimedia Commons photo below](#).)



[Interactive Map](#). Click on a number to read about the military actions there. Viewing will require turning off pop-up blockers or temporarily allowing pop-ups from the site. From TeachingAmericanHistory.org.

[The Pacific Battleground and the World War II Marine](#). Details the horrific conditions the Marines faced in the Pacific War. From *World War II Gyrene* Web site, “dedicated to the 1941-1945 Marine.”

[World War II: The Pacific Campaign, 1941-1945](#). From AC Library’s Student Resource Center database. *AC Online login required*.

Pearl Harbor



[Pearl Harbor](#). Concise reasons for attack from PearlHarbor.org Web site. Although many factors led up to the entry of the U.S. into the war, the Japanese surprise attack at Pearl Harbor is generally viewed as the immediately cause that mobilized the population.

[Why We Slept](#). Discusses the controversy regarding what Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill knew before the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Photo at left: Bombing of U.S.S. Shaw at Pearl Harbor. Photo below: Bombing of U.S.S. Arizona at Pearl Harbor.

“To have the United States at our side was to me the greatest joy. Now at this very moment I knew the United States was in the war, up to the neck and in to the death. So we had won after all!...Hitler’s fate was sealed. Mussolini’s fate was sealed. As for the Japanese, they would be ground to powder.”
—Prime Minister Winston Churchill (after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor)



Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

[Post-traumatic Stress Disorder Hitting World War II Vets](#). Some WWII veterans encounter events in their later lives that trigger PTSD symptoms. Some of these triggering events are “the death of a spouse or fellow

members of veterans' groups who previously provided support; ample time in retirement for reviewing the past; or medical problems that could reduce a prior ability to cope with PTSD." These veterans are from a generation that generally did not seek help for mental health issues, but some of them are now doing so.

[DSM-IV-TR criteria](#) from U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Potential Controversies



These articles are intended as springboards for discussion and are not necessarily the views of the Web page creator or Amarillo College.

Atomic Bomb

["The Decision to Drop the Bomb."](#) Excerpt: "It now seems clear that Truman decided to drop the **bomb** in order to meet two distinct political objectives. First, and most important, was to end the war and prevent the deaths of countless thousands of lives in an American-led invasion of Japan. Second, the atomic blasts sent a clear political message to the Soviet Union and others about the **United**

States' military capabilities. . . . Japanese militarists, including Baron Kantaro Suzuki, who was appointed prime minister in April 1945, said that it was his government's policy to "fight to the very end...even if it meant the deaths of one hundred million Japanese." By Peter Kross. From AC Library's Academic Search Complete database. *AC Online login required.*

Eastwood and Lee Argue about Black Marines at Iwo Jima

["Debating Iwo Jima."](#) Directors Clint Eastwood (Flags of Our Fathers and Letters from Iwo Jima) and Spike Lee ("Doing the Right Thing") argue about the role of black marines on Iwo Jima and whether they should have been shown in Eastwood's movies. The **public domain military photo at right** shows black marines at Iwo Jima. [Read article *The Right to Fight: African-American Marines in World War II*](#) by Bernard C. Nalty.



Historical Revisionism (Textbooks)

["History Textbook Controversies in Japan. ERIC Digest."](#) Allegations have been made that some of Japan's textbooks are promoting denial of the horrific nature of Japanese actions during World War II, especially in China. (2002).

["Japanese Schoolbooks Anger S. Korea, China."](#) Washingtonpost.com.

Excerpt: "On Tuesday, the Education Ministry approved a newer edition of the same text that critics say further distorts the past and portrays imperial Japan as a liberator rather than an occupier of its Asian neighbors. The text shuns the word 'invasion,' for instance, and leaves out critical accounts of events such as the Japanese army's massacre of civilians in Nanking, China, in 1937. . . . Other texts for the 2006 school year were toned down. The term "comfort women" -- a euphemism for wartime sex slaves, mostly from

Korea and China -- disappeared from all eight junior high history books approved by the national government Tuesday. One book maintained a reference to wartime "comfort stations" for Japanese soldiers."



John Wayne as Genghis Khan? Click [here](#) and scroll down to see photo.

Hollywood Casting of Ethnic Characters Questionable in the Past, Better Now

[Studios Send Message to Academy](#). From Variety.com. Among the Caucasian actors playing Native Americans have been Rock Hudson, Burt Lancaster, Don Ameche, Jeff Chandler, Esther Williams, Natalie Wood, and Boris Karloff. Among the Caucasian actors portraying Asian characters have been Edward G. Robinson, Lana Turner, Loretta Young, and Katharine Hepburn. Mongol warlord Genghis Khan (at left) was played by none other than John Wayne! By Jeanine Basinger.

[Time.com Q&A with Adam Beach \("Ira Hayes"\)](#). Ira Hayes has been portrayed by Caucasian actors Tony Curtis and Lee Marvin. Beach is the first Native American actor to play the role (in "Flags of Our Fathers"). Another example is Jesus, who has been portrayed by actors with light hair and blue eyes.

Propaganda: A Tool of Both Sides



Japanese really are."

[American Propaganda Posters](#). The government disseminated pro-war propaganda before Pearl Harbor, but it was not very successful. After Pearl Harbor, the poster campaign was increased. This site shows several posters and explains their purpose.

[Know Your Enemy: Japan](#). (YouTube highlights). One in a series of WW2 films directed by Frank Capra, who also directed such American classics as *It's a Wonderful Life*, *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, and *It Happened One Night*. The stated goal of the 1945 film was to "see what kind of people these

[War and Anti-War Films](#). This site lists and describes some of the American films.

Reviews (Book)

[Military Review excerpt](#): "This is the best battle book I've ever read." By Major John W. Amberg II. From AC Library's Academic Search Complete database. *AC Online login required*.

[Naval History excerpt](#): "As a veteran of Tarawa and Iwo, I do not know when I have read a book that so moved me in its simplicity and dignity of story about man's inhumanity to man, dedication to duty, and survival. It should be put on the 'must-get' list for Marine and other military and civilian libraries, because it addresses the human part of war and is purposefully devoid of tactics and statistics. These six young men will live on in history as personifications of what was expected of young Americans in that period of world turmoil. The eminent historian Stephen Ambrose said of James Bradley: 'He produced the best battle book I've ever read.' This is very high praise, and it is an honor to be in his company by adding that I relived completely the battle for Iwo in ways I had forgotten for years. I highly recommend *Flags of Our Fathers*; it

is storytelling at its best." By Major Norman Hatch. From AC Library's Academic Search Complete database. *AC Online login required.*

[Naval War College Review excerpt:](#) "The author delights in the pure integrity and patriotism of his protagonists. Nonetheless, **Bradley's** anecdotal evidence makes a strong case that the principal source of battlefield bravery has little to do with national allegiance--it's your buddies who count. He wrestles with the term "heroes"--a title of honor strenuously rejected by all the flag raisers. There is little doubt, however, where the author places these men who stood atop Suribachi, beneath their flag." By Tom Fedyszyn. From AC Library's Academic Search Complete database. *AC Online login required.*

Reviews (Movies)

[Discussion with Clint Eastwood, director of "Flags of Our Fathers" and "Letters from Iwo Jima."](#) Charlie Rose show. From AC Library's Newspaper Source database. *AC Online login required.*

[Entertainment Weekly review excerpt:](#) "Stark in its valor, graphically alive in its pose of action, the famous photograph of five Marines and a Navy corpsman raising the U.S. flag on Mount Suribachi, one of the crests of Iwo Jima, exerts such a singular and iconic power that almost anyone could come up with a different explanation for what remains so stirring about it. The position of the men — that crouch wrenching upward — is a perfect metaphor for the crucial last gasp of American will that pushed the nation to victory at the end of World War II. And, of course, the fact that you can't see any of the men's faces incarnates the selflessness of their mission. They are individuals who, by implication, could be anyone; they are soldiers fused and transformed into a straining human statue that becomes, in an instant, timeless. As they lift the flag, all of us lift the flag. And that is America — or, at least, that is its promise." By Owen Gleiberman.

[Roger Ebert, Chicago Sun-Times, review excerpt:](#) "Eastwood's two-film project [with Letters from Iwo Jima] is one of the most visionary of all efforts to depict the reality and meaning of battle. The battle scenes, alternating between close-up combat and awesome aerial shots of the bombardment and landing, are lean, violent, horrifying."

Women in World War II

[What Did You Do in the War, Grandma?](#) This site features oral histories of women living during World War II. They describe what their everyday lives were like.

["The Image and Reality of Women Who Worked During World War II."](#) National Park Service article. Did the new role of women in the workplace continue after the war?

["Women's Roles: Who Was Rosie the Riveter?"](#) (See "We Can Do It!" poster in this section.) This article from the Washington State Historical Society discusses women's roles during World War II.



[Women and World War II.](#) This About.com Links page contains a wide variety of links encompassing many aspects of women's lives during the war. Links pertain to both military and civilian women populations.



For a publicity photograph, the women of Company H, 2d Headquarters Battalion, Henderson Hall, model the various work and dress uniforms worn by women Marines during the course of World War II. From left are PFC Florence Miller, Cpl Lois Koester, Cpl Carol Harding, Sgt Violet Salela, Cpl Grace Steinmetz, Cpl Rose Mazur, and PFC Mary Swiderski. *Department of Defense Photo (USMC) 13061*

[Free a Marine to Fight: Women Marines in WWII](#)

This interesting series by retired Marine Colonel Mary StremLOW describes many aspects of the lives of female Marines. The content is comprehensive, but it is divided into manageable chapters. The photo at left shows some of the uniforms they wore.

Created by the Amarillo College Library

[Comments/Feedback link](#)