# Film Review: Bradley Cooper's 'American Sniper' is Entertaining, One-Sided American Propaganda

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CHICAGO – I understand *why* they did it. But that doesn't make it right to do.

In order to earn sign-off from Chris Kyle's family and the U.S. Navy – and to appease the patriotic American public – "American Sniper" needed to make the U.S. military's most lethal sniper nicer than he actually was and generalize a people as people you should hate.



Rating: **3.0/5.0**

Military men and women make great sacrifices to protect us at home and we should be very appreciative. Some pay the ultimate price with their lives. But rather than being truly honest to the subject matter, the film glorifies it, sugarcoats the truth and creatively changes details to assure we see the hero Kyle was without most of the much darker anti-hero he also was.

Disturbingly, "American Sniper" director Clint Eastwood decided to ignore Kyle's lies like they never existed. Kyle said in his autobiography [18] that he sniped looters during Hurricane Katrina, killed two carjackers in Texas and punched Jesse Ventura in the face.

None of that was true [19] and Eastwood ignored it in the film. Documentaries have a responsibility to be honest and objective. Why doesn't this action/drama film? Kyle would still be seen as a hero even if Eastwood honestly and ethically exposed Kyle's lies. Instead, the film loses credibility for being a true story that is only a half truth.

Furthermore, while the film doesn't overtly *say* or even necessarily intend to portray the thought that "all Iraqis are terrorists," which certainly isn't true, it *feels* that the film is primarily *showing* that. It does attempt to counter that implied perception by taking you behind the scenes of one Iraqi local.

**Read Adam Fendelman's full review of "American Sniper".** [20]

The film portrays this Iraqi father as having a heart and being afraid of his own people as much as the Americans who hate him. But still, the majority of the film makes you feel like "these are bad people" and "you should be afraid of them".

Some of them are bad people – like you will find within any group of people – but the film fails to differentiate extremists you should fear and hate from the everyday people you shouldn't.

You could just as easily zero in on a group of Americans who are equally bad people, but the agenda of this film is to illustrate an American hero, make you feel sorry for him and hate his enemy. The danger of a film focusing like this is it lacks objectivity and instead resorts to one-sided propaganda.

The film's lethal oversight is in what is left out. While no one is a perfect man or woman and Chris Kyle certainly is no exception, you don't get a true sense of who he was. The film typically gives him the perfect, calm line to say to his wife and he never misses a shot in war. This man is

good, but he's not flawless and the film glazes over his many imperfections.

*"American Sniper" stars Bradley Cooper, Sienna Miller, Kyle Gallner, Jake McDorman, Mido Hamada, Luke Grimes, Navid Negahban and Keir O'Donnell from director Clint Eastwood and writer Jason Hall based on the book by Chris Kyle. The film, which opened on Jan. 16, 2015 and has a running time of 132 minutes, is rated "R" for strong and disturbing war violence and language throughout including some sexual references.*

**Continue for Adam Fendelman's full review of "American Sniper".** [20]



Bradley Cooper as Chris Kyle in "American Sniper".
*Image credit: Warner Bros. Pictures*

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