

Blu-Ray Review: John Wayne, David Janssen in Controversial 'The Green Berets'

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on January 11, 2010 - 12:22pm

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CHICAGO – Why some films are released on Blu-ray while others languish unavailable even on standard DVD can be quite mysterious. Take for example the recent release of John Wayne's controversial war film "The Green Berets," a slice of war propaganda designed to pump up American support of our involvement in Vietnam. Why this movie? Why now? Whatever the reason, I'm all for more classics on Blu-ray and WB holds the rights to many so I'd like to support more releases like "The Green Berets," even if there are hundreds of better films that could have been picked first.



Blu-Ray Rating: **2.5/5.0**

Is it possible that someone has sense of humor enough to time the release of "The Green Berets" with last month's release of "Inglourious Basterds," Quentin Tarantino's WWII film about the power of propaganda? Or even that seeing that movie last summer reminded someone of Wayne's, as the box describes it, "red-white-and-blue depiction of America's Vietnam effort"? "Basterds" features a subplot about a piece of war-pushing propaganda named "Nation's Pride" that's about as subtle as "The Green Berets".



The Green Berets was released on Blu-Ray on January 5th, 2010.

Photo credit: Warner Brothers Home Video

Which is not to say I don't enjoy "The Green Berets". I do. It's a fantastic slice of movie history, an amazing look at what kind of power John Wayne, who also co-directed the film, had over not just Hollywood but American hearts and minds. Can you imagine someone doing the same thing now? Can you imagine a pro-Iraq action film in which we go in and liberate the country as the sun sets in the East (as happens at the end of "The Green Berets")? "The Green Berets" is a fascinating historical document and all such films should be available on Blu-ray.

Based on Robin Moore's novel, "The Green Berets," produced in conjunction with President Lyndon Johnson providing military assistance, tells the story of tried-and-true soldiers led by Wayne into battle in Vietnam. Admittedly prompted by anti-war sentiment to make the film, "The Green Berets" is clearly designed to turn some of that around, although its release right around the time of the My Lai massacre didn't help the public opinion of the film.

Wayne, never one of our more subtle filmmakers, made a movie that was so wildly glorifying of the Vietnam War that Roger Ebert even went as far as to list it as one of his most-hated, [zero-star films](#) [14], saying, "I would not want my fellow citizens to think I was as stupid and simple-minded as the Americans in this film."

The Blu-ray release of "The Green Berets" doesn't include any retrospective look at the film, merely a 7-minute vintage featurette from the era of its release called "The Moviemakers: The Making of The Green Berets" and the film's trailer.

'The Green Berets' is released by Warner Brothers Home Video and stars John Wayne, David Janssen, Jim Hutton, Aldo Ray, Bruce Cabot, and George Takei. It was written by James Lee Barrett and directed by Wayne and Ray Kellogg. It was released on Blu-Ray on January 5th, 2010.



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