



The Big Red One

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Describing Sam Fuller as a cult legend and a celluloid genius would be like describing Muhammad Ali as a boxer or Jimi Hendrix as a guitar player. He was a singular American visionary, a giant of independent filmmaking, and a king of bruised-knuckle cinematic poetry. *The Big Red One* is his masterpiece. Twenty years in the making, both the novel and the film are based on Fuller's own experiences with the Army's First Infantry Division ("the Big Red One") in World War II. The story centers on the friendship of five soldiers and follows them from the arid landscapes of Vichy French Africa to Europe to the beaches of Normandy on D-Day and onward into Germany. Excruciating scenes of suffering and brutality are juxtaposed against heartbreak scenes of compassion and selflessness. In Fuller's vision the lines between heroism and villainy are blurred—"the only glory in war is surviving"—but *The Big Red One* also provides an epic adventure steeped in the true history of World War II.

The Big Red One Details

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Author : Samuel Fuller , Richard Schickel (Introduction)

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From Reader Review The Big Red One for online ebook

Tom Newth says

i love sam fuller. he writes at the end that truly to capture the experience of war the book should have at least one booby-trap. but short of being physically maimed, the reader still feels quite comprehensively roughed up. bloody good.

Jay Wright says

One of the best war novels that I have read. It is not pro or anti war. I think it is just an honest portrayal as to what war is really like. It is confusing. The characters are especially well developed. You are never sure of the why, but they move on. I guess that is what war is.

Erik says

finished the screenplay not the novel. took me awhile but very interesting.:)

Wilson Lanue says

I consider Sam Fuller's film *The Big Red One*, released in 1980 and restored in 2002, the greatest war movie I've ever seen. And the greatest I'm likely ever to see.

This is the novel version, written between the time Fuller lived it with the titular First Infantry Division (fighting from North Africa to a Nazi death camp in Czechoslovakia) and the time he got to shoot it for screen.

Your mileage may vary, but I think the restored film is stronger. Watch it, and if you find yourself wanting more, as I did, read this. Also read *A Third Face*, Fuller's non-fiction work, written near the end of his life, which includes plenty of memories from the war.

Jackson Andrews says

This is another great story inside the history of WWII. It is a must for any historical reader out there. Even readers of every genre can appreciate the irony of war and feel the life taken away from so many people.

I think this should be read in history classes in high school across America.

Kids today don't learn enough about why they have the right to choose what they wear, where they go, what sports to play, or which car they want for the 16th birthday. The need to know why they can do all those

things is most important. Honesty, truth, loyalty, honor, sacrifice, courage, rage , and fear.

recommend to all

Asaf Greene says

one of the best books i have read in a while

Ryan says

The best war novel I have read. Definitely read if you are a fan of WWII fiction.

Jason says

Believe it or not, I read this novel when I was in the 5th grade--I got it as a birthday gift from a friend in my class. It was the first real big book I ever tackled & I believe I'm better for it. Not only is it an excellent novel, but it is an excellent example of what a novel about soldiers & WWII can be.

Fuller approaches his novel by telling it from the point of view of the squad's Sargent, who is a veteran of the Great War & designed the company's insignia from which the book derives its title. He is not portrayed as a hero with much praise & accolades thrust upon him wrapped in the stars & stripes--far from it. He is portrayed as a career soldier who is doing his job: fighting a war & helping his men survive by leading them through the countless meat grinders they find themselves in. It is not structured like a SGT. ROCK comic book, nor a anti-war statement--it is about the business of war & the men who willingly or unwillingly fight it. Furthermore, Fuller does not waste his prose on the military hardware the soldiers use--not giving us the background history to a Sherman tank or an M-1 carbine--instead he writes about the hardware which informs us about them in the manner in which they are used to conduct war. Brilliant.

Then Fuller sets this WWII novel on a higher scale than others of its kind by showing a point of view from the enemy--a German Sargent to be exact--our main character's doppelganger in Werhmacht garb (not SS, thank God). Both the American & German counterparts have their own threads within the story, sometimes converging in battles, but never coming face-to-face till the novels end. Again, brilliant.

Sam Fuller not only was a soldier but one of Hollywood's greatest filmmakers. When the film THE BIG RED ONE came out, I was happy to know I had read the novel first. It is great film too & I long to see its extended cut. Regardless, I still find the book to be way better & Fuller a solid writer as he is a filmmaker.

I do not seek out novels about WWII or any other war for that matter. I'm not a die-hard war buff who has tech manuals about weapons of war--though, I am fascinated by war & its history (especially WWI). But I will say from reading this particular novel, I have read one of the greatest novels about war & the soldiers who fight them. It is one of the few novels I would read again if given the chance. It is also one of those few novels which has stayed with me throughout the years from the day I finished it. It's that good.

Mike Wigal says

Lee Marvin was perfect as the sergeant in the movie.

Biblioteca Lardero says

Cinco jóvenes soldados de infantería se ven conducidos por su sargento a través de los campos de batalla de media Europa durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial, desde los áridos paisajes de Vichy, en el África francesa, hasta Europa y las playas de Normandía, en el día D, pasando por el asalto a Mons en Bélgica, la Batalla de Crucifix Hill en Alemania y terminado por el cruce de la Línea Sigfrido el 19 de enero de 1945, donde la guerra termina para ellos.

Lewis Manalo says

The first war novel that I read that actually seemed realistic. They should be teaching this book in schools. Most other war novels don't depict soldiers as human enough or as funny enough or as foul-mouthed enough. Which is probably why they're allowed in schools. The movie's a real classic, too.

Beth says

It took me forever to finish this book but overall I did enjoy it. At first I kept thinking that no one soldier would fight it all of those battles, North Africa, Italy, D-Day, Battle of the bulge and more but when I went back to the preface I saw the author did fight in all of those battles. I did get tired of every new grunt getting killed in the first two pages after he was introduced to the reader. Now I have to find the authors autobiography and read that. I am sure it will be fascinating.

Jaime Bustamante says

I personally thought it was an incredible book. One of my all-time favorites!

Christian J says

This book has some intriguing scenes, but the elevation of Sergeant to mythical heights so early kinda did not do it for me...

Anna Alexander says

Blood, guts, war is hell. A very good book despite all the gore. I couldn't put it down. Now I need to see the movie.
