

Band of Brothers



Based on the book by Stephen Ambrose, Band of Brothers is a 10 part mini-series focusing on Easy Company of the 101st Airborne division of the Army during WWII. This true story follows the young men who volunteered to join this division from basic training through the end of the war. Easy Company took part in some of the most intense battles of the war, including the D-Day invasion of Normandy and the Battle of the Bulge. The length of the mini-series allows focus on historical detail and procedures, as well as an in-depth look at the varied responses of the men to the horrors of war- running the gamut from fear and compassion to confusion and cruelty. Throughout there is a focus on the relationships between the men who relied on each for their very lives and sanity. Each episode begins with remarks from the actual men who are portrayed in the series, which makes the episodes even more poignant. This is not a sugar-coated view of heroes in battle, but a realistic portrayal of the atrocities of war and its effect on the participants. It is sometimes hard to watch the atrocities these brave men faced on a daily basis and to see those that do not survive. Especially heartbreaking to me was the liberation of a concentration camp. These men who had seen and done so much were shocked and horrified at their discovery, wanting to immediately ease the pain and suffering of the prisoners.

Excellent directing and writing, as well as superb acting by the mostly unknown cast make this an engrossing mini-series. Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg produced this epic for HBO and the care and attention taken to create it shine through. This series presents a realistic portrait of the brave men who fought World War II, putting human faces to war stories we have all studied in school. It is well worth the 10 hour commitment.

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