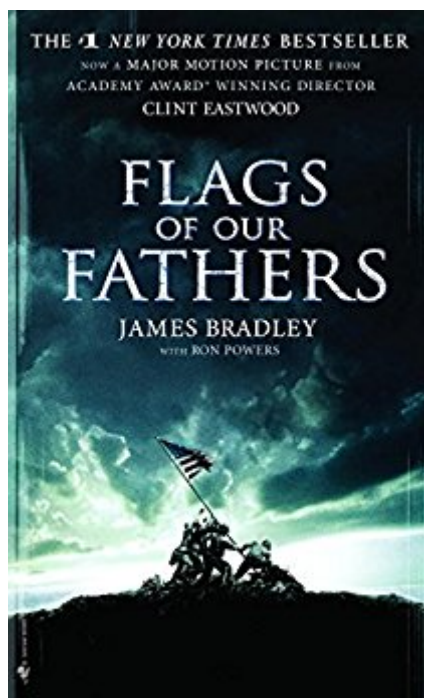


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# Flags Of Our Fathers



## Synopsis

In this unforgettable chronicle of perhaps the most famous moment in American military history, James Bradley has captured the glory, the triumph, the heartbreak, and the legacy of the six men who raised the flag at Iwo Jima. Here is the true story behind the immortal photograph that has come to symbolize the courage and indomitable will of America. In February 1945, American Marines plunged into the surf at Iwo Jima—and into history. Through a hail of machine-gun and mortar fire that left the beaches strewn with comrades, they battled to the island's highest peak. And after climbing through a landscape of hell itself, they raised a flag. Now the son of one of the flagraisers has written a powerful account of six very different young men who came together in a moment that will live forever. To his family, John Bradley never spoke of the photograph or the war. But after his death at age seventy, his family discovered closed boxes of letters and photos. In *Flags of Our Fathers*, James Bradley draws on those documents to retrace the lives of his father and the men of Easy Company. Following these men's paths to Iwo Jima, James Bradley has written a classic story of the heroic battle for the Pacific's most crucial island—an island riddled with Japanese tunnels and 22,000 fanatic defenders who would fight to the last man. But perhaps the most interesting part of the story is what happened after the victory. The men in the photo—three were killed during the battle—were proclaimed heroes and flown home, to become reluctant symbols. For two of them, the adulation was shattering. Only James Bradley's father truly survived, displaying no copy of the famous photograph in his home, telling his son only: "The real heroes of Iwo Jima were the guys who didn't come back." Few books ever have captured the complexity and furor of war and its aftermath as well as *Flags of Our Fathers*. A penetrating, epic look at a generation at war, this is history told with keen insight, enormous honesty, and the passion of a son paying homage to his father. It is the story of the difference between truth and myth, the meaning of being a hero, and the essence of the human experience of war. From the Hardcover edition.

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World War II

## Customer Reviews

A good book for the personal insights about an historic battle and some of the units involved. As it is written by the son of one of the men who was involved in raising the flag over Iwo Jima during a brief interlude in the fighting, it naturally most closely follows the father's story, but does a good job of filling us in on the others involved in what came to be considered a signature moment in US military history. The book debunks the idea of the flag raising as heroic and how the attention paid to it ultimately led to a lot of negative consequences. But that narrative does not diminish the true valor of all those fighting on Iwo Jima and how the American losses paid off in the ultimate victory over an entrenched and ruthless foe. That said, even with the help of an experienced co-author, the book was over-written, given to repetition and some periods of (perhaps understandable, while none-the-less undesirable) self-aggrandizement of the family. More importantly, some of the most insightful aspects of the story seemed to be deliberately held back. In a nutshell, while the author maintained over and over again that his flag raising father never had anything to say about the battle, eventually, drip-by-drip, we are given information that gives a true indication of the heartbreak his father endured. The book is definitely worth reading, but it could have been much better.

Great nonfiction writing. I am very unfamiliar with the Pacific front battles in WWII, which seem much less known than all of the European battles, and this was an excellent intro. I really liked his perspective as the son of one of the flag raisers, really brought it into modern day perspective. There was a little repetition of information from time to time in sections of the book, but I really

enjoyed it, cried several times throughout, and had many moments of reflection on what and why people do to die defending their country. The battle was gruesome and it's quite graphic at times. It really moved beyond the cliches and helped me appreciate the sacrifices on both sides, USA and Japan; the lives the men gave for their countries.

Excellent account of the history of one of the most famous photographs of all time as well as a detailed look into the lives of those involved including the historic battle for Iwo Jima. If you enjoy World War Two history, you won't be disappointed.

I recently finished reading this book and was very moved. I am a former Navy Hospital Corpsman, and retired Nurse Corps Officer. I spent a year in Viet Nam with the "First of the First" Alpha 1/1 and have had the highest respect for the U.S. Marine Corps. I can remember as a child looking up at the Dress Blue uniform in my Dad's closet and being awed. My Dad was a GYSGT with the 4th Marine Division landing on Iwo Jima and consequently I have read nearly everything printed about this epic battle. This book was different in the fact that it gave more background about the boys who fought, died and survived this battle. I can barely imagine the horror and fear that these men went through. I don't believe they have received the credit they deserved and have often been overlooked due to the battle at Normandy but this book should serve to help illuminate their efforts. I am eternally grateful for their sacrifices and proud to be a son of a marine who fought in this battle. They were truly heroes. Mr. Bradley is to be commended for a truly great book. This book should be required reading.

I bought this book at the airport in Dayton, Ohio on the way home from attending the reunion of my army unit that I was in Vietnam with in 1966. *Flags of Our Fathers* is a spell binding page turner that I couldn't put down. Many of the stories about the combat and terror endured by those marines on Iwo Jima brought tears to my eyes. The history of the six flag raisers is very well written and very interesting. Over a quarter of the Medal of Honors received by the marines during WWII were received during the 36 days of fighting on Iwo Jima. It was the largest and longest sustained battle of WWII. The authors did a fabulous job of story telling. I agree with Stephen Ambrose in his saying that it was the best combat book he ever read. It is the best non-fiction book I have ever read. It has everything, hero's, villains, sadness, tragedy, excitement, happiness. Every human emotion from one end of the spectrum to the other will be experienced by reading this book. On Iwo Jima, uncommon valor was a common occurrence among those marines who fought there, many of whom

died there. This book is a must read and it makes me more appreciative of the liberties I enjoy today because of those marines and all of the combat veterans of WWII. I saw extensive combat for a year with the army in Vietnam, but it pales in comparison to what those marines endured for 36 days in Feb 1945. Jim Husing Vietnam Veteran

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