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Film Review

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**American Sniper**

Directed by Clint Eastwood (2013)

When a country is either at war or just ending a war there will always be opinions on whether or not the war was good or bad. Movies during this period also usually reflect on the director’s opinion of that war. This is not that type of war movie. Instead this film is an overview of the life of Navy Seal Chris Kyle, the deadliest sniper in American history.

The movie starts in the middle of the action at one of the most intense scenes of the movie involving an Iraqi mother and child. It then flashes back into Chris’s childhood and shows how his father, failed rodeo career, and witnessing coverage of terrorist attacks on the US Embassy influenced his decision to join the Navy and protect his country. A montage of scenes showing his initial training gives insight to actual tasks done by Navy Seals every day. This then evolves into showing Chris’s greatness with a sniper and how he stood out from the pack.

The film continues to show Chris’s experiences on his tours in Iraq and the violence that he had to experience and take part in. His true character is shown is these scenes where he treats his job of killing terrorists as strictly business. This persona is throughout the entire film and gives an inside look into how Chris was in reality.

While other war movies such as “Saving Private Ryan” are graphic and gory, Eastwood chose to leave out the gore and not focus on extreme graphics. Sure there is some blood shown because after all it is a war movie, but only when absolutely necessary. This adds to the film by keeping the focus on the character of Chris and showing that he was not a cold blooded killer.

During scenes of high intensity and action there are two important elements used. Sound is a major factor in these scenes and the tension is heightened by muffled background noise accompanied by loud heart beats and gunshots. This is done to show the audience what the characters were focused on at the time. Slow motion is also used in these scenes to create a dramatic effect. When having to make a life threatening decision one second can feel like a minute and this is exactly what slowing down the frames does for this movie. It is also used to focus the audience in on one certain aspect like Chris’s famous shot that traveled over a mile.

This movie is both intense and gets your heartbeat up while also playing with your emotions and brings you to tears. It represents the immense struggles that soldiers go through and how even the most intimidating figures suffer from their war time experiences. I have watched this movie multiple times and never get tired of it. It easily gets a 9 out of 10 from me solely based on how real the depiction is. It is also so great because Bradley Cooper has never done such a serious role like this and absolutely nailed it. I would highly recommend this movie to anyone who enjoys an emotional story and also loves their country.