The Dirty Dozen Encyclopedia Article

The Dirty Dozen

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The Dirty Dozen

Directed by Robert Aldrich, *The Dirty Dozen* tells the story of Major Reisman (Lee Marvin) and the twelve hardened convicts he selects to join him on a suicide mission behind German lines in 1944. *The Dirty Dozen* remains an interesting and popular film, as it is meticulously crafted, deftly edited, and features several future stars at the beginning of their careers (including Donald Sutherland, Charles Bronson, and Telly Savalas). Although released in 1967 at the height of the anti-Vietnam war movement, *The Dirty Dozen* was nevertheless a success, becoming one of the biggest box-office hits in MGM's history. War protesters readily accepted the film's depiction of officers as indiscriminate killers, while more militaristic moviegoers approved of the film's brutal combat scenes.

Further Reading:

Basinger, Jeanine. *The World War II Combat Film: Anatomy of a Genre.* New York, Columbia University Press, 1986.

Manuell, Roger. *Films and the Second World War.* New Jersey, A.S.Barnes and Co., 1974.