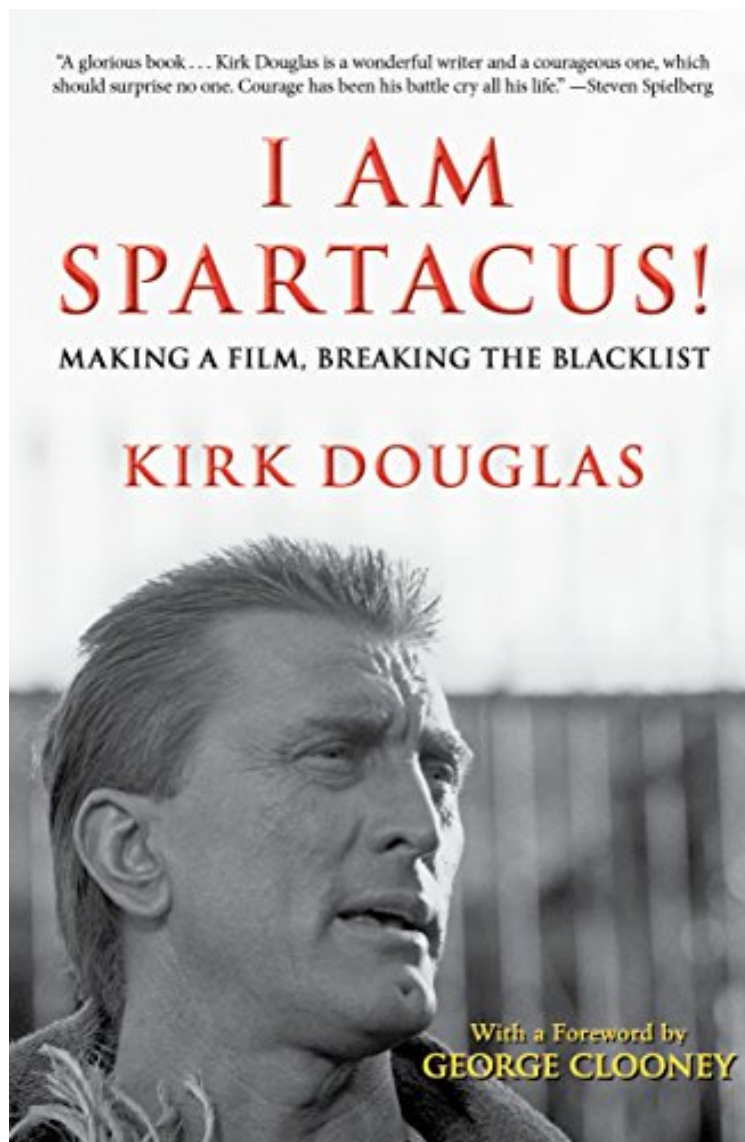


(Free) I Am Spartacus!: Making a Film, Breaking the Blacklist

## I Am Spartacus!: Making a Film, Breaking the Blacklist

*Kirk Douglas*

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**Kirk Douglas : I Am Spartacus!: Making a Film, Breaking the Blacklist** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised I Am Spartacus!: Making a Film, Breaking the Blacklist:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Kirk Douglas, you are Spartacus, and it is our duty to stand besides you and say "I am Spartacus." By Gisela Hausmann "I Am Spartacus!: Making a Film, Breaking the Blacklist" by Kirk Douglas is a gift. Everybody who wonders about where the United States is going or could be going should read this

book. In the opening chapter, Douglas muses, "... When I look back at Spartacus today more than fifty years after the fact I'm amazed that it ever happened at all. Everything was against us the McCarthy-era politics, competition with another picture, everything..." Kirk Douglas begins the book by describing how his career as an actor took off, how he started his production company, and his family, while the McCarthy trials were going on. Though he is appalled by what's going on, he is also happy that he is not affected. Douglas describes the injustice; that screen writer Dalton Trumbo went to jail during for failing to raid on fellow industry professionals. The fear is great. About director Frank Capra regarding "Roman Holiday": "... Capra passed because he smelled a Red, replied Willy. He thinks this story was written by some guy on the blacklist and he wants no part of it...." It was of course Dalton Trumbo, who wrote the script. Douglas meets Stanley Kubrick and shoots the famous anti-war movie "Paths of Glory," one of my favorites. Here is how it happened: "... Stanley responded with a question of his own. Have you ever read a book called Paths of Glory? I shook my head. He handed me a script with that title. ... I took it home and read it that night. It knocked me out. Stanley was my first call the next morning. You wrote this? I asked. Yes, he answered, calm as always. With Jim Thompson and Calder Willingham. Stanley, I love this picture! We are going to make it! It will never make a nickel, but we have to make it! And that was how Stanley Kubrick came into my life. Paths of Glory was set to shoot in the spring of 1957. I feel that it is then that Douglas' mind-set is changing. His mind-set is evolving to, "I can no longer be a bystander." Douglas falls in love with Howard Fast's novel "Spartacus." Fast too was in imprisoned during the McCarthy trials. To me, it is reasonable that helped Fast come up with the concept of "Spartacus." And, Douglas wants to turn it into a movie, never mind what the obstacles. Douglas also wants to hire the finest actors to give the movie the backbone to become a success. Douglas' biggest problem? - Fast is incapable of writing a great script to his own novel. That's where Trumbo comes into play, again. And, slowly but surely the pieces fall together. "... There's always been a certain part of my personality that kicks in when people tell me I can't do something. You can't make Spartacus. You can't trust Sam Norton. I had enough of being told You can't. ..." As the script evolves, seemingly simultaneously, Kirk Douglas "the Rebel" grows to become Kirk Douglas "the Honorable Rebel," the man who will break the Blacklist, more or less alone, against all odds, just like "Spartacus." Thank God, Kirk Douglas' life story has a happier ending. Knowing the movie so well I can't help but think that Douglas put his and his industry professionals friends' thoughts into words when Spartacus says, "I pray for a son who will be born free." The movie industry wanted to be "free", too; this movie, "Spartacus," was their vehicle, in a double sense. All of them grew with the movie's story line and in the end the movie became their vehicle to tell the world, that McCarthyism and Black-listing was over. And, Kirk Douglas/Spartacus was the man who elected to fight for it, against the odds. The book is very personal, in part shocking, in part funny, and sprinkled with hilarious anecdotes. Every chapter starts with a quote from the movie, for me the most significant being When a free man dies, he loses the pleasure of life; a slave loses its pain. Death is the only freedom a slave knows. That's why he's not afraid of it. That's why we'll win. Kirk Douglas as Spartacus These days, when we watch the news we see and hear things which should be shocking to any American. Words of fear and "black-listing" others drive the dialog. I have always believe that Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it. - George Santayana Is a brilliant quote. Thus it makes sense to learn from Kirk Douglas/Spartacus' views. "... Fear breeds fear. These men people like Jack Warner, Louis B. Mayer, and Harry Cohn were terrified their great power would be taken away from them in a heartbeat if their loyalty to America was ever called into question. So they became superpatriots. And to prove themselves right-minded, they were more than willing to sacrifice the lives of others, even their fellow Jews. They were like the Vichy government in France, collaborators who held on to their influence and position at the expense of their fellow countrymen..." We can't let that happen again! Kirk Douglas' book "I Am Spartacus!: Making a Film, Breaking the Blacklist" is an entertaining reminder, what would have to happen to break a cycle - again. PS: This book is a beautiful homage to Dalton Trumbo, who "... was a man who loved life. He loved living it, he loved describing it, he loved affecting it..." 5! \* stars, Mr. Douglas, I tip my hat. You are Spartacus, and it is our duty to stand besides you and say "I am Spartacus." Gisela Hausmann, author review expert 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A movie producer who did the right thing By D. Peters A wonderful book about the making of Spartacus straight from the star and producer of the movie. Many people don't realize how active a producer Kirk Douglas was. This lively remembrance is absolutely packed full of detail and backstory. It will keep many movie lovers awake late at night. It is that hard to put down. Fascinating in a hundred ways but most fascinating is the fact that Mr. Douglas will turn 100 years old this year. He has lived the life and remembered all the delicious details and this book is a gift from him to us. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A heroic film and a dark period in American political history! By Michael Merbaum Kirk Douglas is an icon of American film, as an actor, producer and director behind the scenes. But, his thoughtful reflections about a wonderful film, the actors, writers, directors, studio bosses and the political animosities of those times makes for a compelling tale. He tells the story of this wonderful film as part of a larger drama that dominated the political outrages impacting the art of film. Great read! Mike Merbaum

From Kirk Douglas, Hollywood royalty and bestselling author of *The Ragman's Son* and *My Stroke of Luck*, comes the candid story of the making of *Spartacus*, the blockbuster film that broke the blacklist

An entertaining and informative look at the troubled gestation of a film of both artistic and social significance. Kirkus  
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