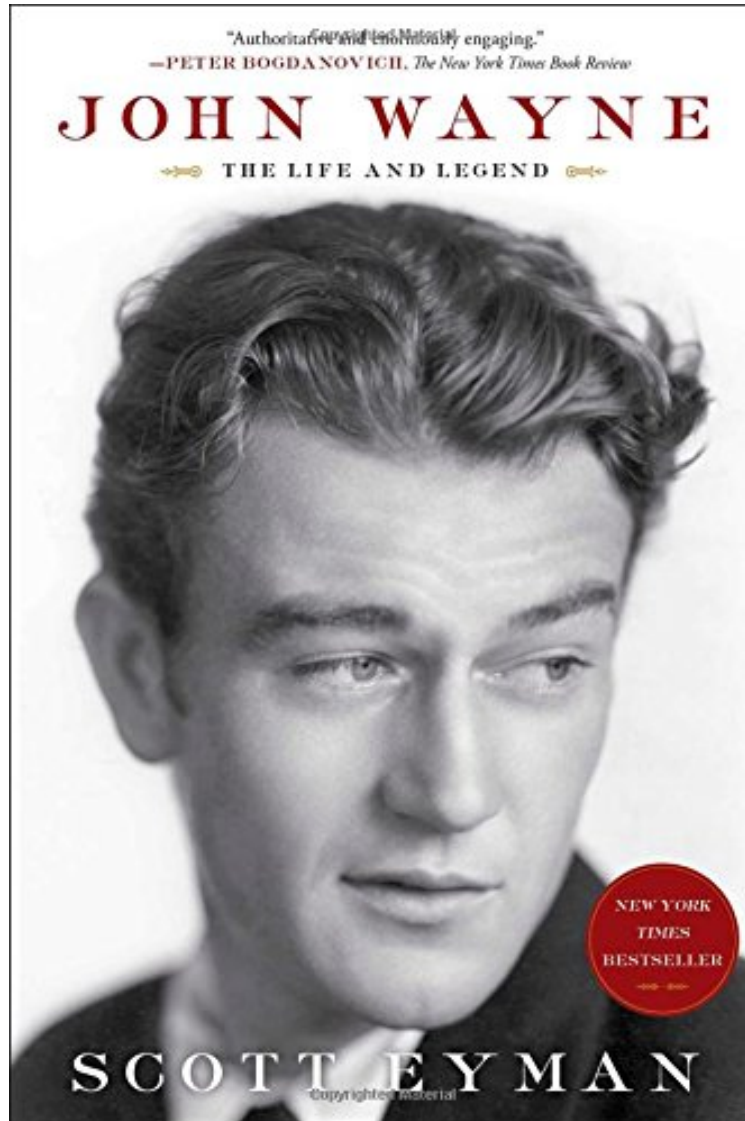


(Read now) John Wayne: The Life and Legend

John Wayne: The Life and Legend

Scott Eyman

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Scott Eyman : John Wayne: The Life and Legend before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised John Wayne: The Life and Legend:

173 of 176 people found the following review helpful. Probably The Best Wayne Bio To DateBy R PRIUSI read the electronic pre-publication copy of this book compliments of NetGalley. The opinions expressed in this review are mine.I initially had no specific expectations about this book. I have read several Wayne bios and assumed that this might be a rehash of the others. To my way of thinking everything worthwhile had been said.As it turned out, either time had blurred my recollections or Scott Eyman looked at Wayne with a fresh outlook. This was a very good book.

It was broken down in three segments that covered Wayne's early life and career, his flush years as an accepted actor and bonified star, and his later years as an iconic old lion. Eyman diverted from earlier biographers by providing a lot of personal information about Wayne the actor and Wayne's personal insecurities. As Eyman readily points out, Wayne spent a good portion of his life trying to please his mother who summarily rejected him in favor of his brother who was four years his junior. By his mother's standards Wayne was incapable of doing anything right. Wayne also was publicly very low key about how he fell into movies, but he wanted to be successful and also wanted to be authentic. His attempts at getting some coaching regarding his acting are funny but also reflect a man who fought his way from the bottom up. As for Wayne, he was often a case study in contradictions. He wanted to be a good husband and father, but he ended up coming up short in that area. Sadly, he came to the realization that he let his first marriage slip through his hands and was left with plenty of regret. He got into the movies to make money initially as a prop man and film extra. While he wasn't a trained actor, he worked hard to learn his craft and render a good performance even when he was the king of the cheap western. When he finally had a chance to appear in better films, he continued to learn. Beyond Eyman's top notch research, this book provides a lot of detailed information about making movies on the cheap. Not surprisingly, once Wayne achieved success he would have gladly forgotten the B movies and the many years he spent making them. This book also covers Wayne's three marriages, his familial relationships, and his conservative outlook which extended to politics. It is also rich with a lot of anecdotes by way of family, friends, and Wayne himself. Among the greatest revelation in this book covers Wayne's relationship with Marlene Dietrich. Beyond the three films they made together, they had a sexual relationship that lasted longer than their films together with Dietrich in hot pursuit. It was Dietrich who in many ways put Wayne on the road to financial success and stability by getting Wayne to change management which was a complete game changer for Wayne. This book does a commendable job when it comes to looking at Wayne's movie performances which evolved over the years and also defines the nature of Wayne's friendships with people like Harry Carey and John Ford. As for myself, this book was a fluid reading experience. This book moved quickly because I was never bored. It maintained its initial momentum throughout. I found myself in the end having more respect for Wayne the man and Wayne the actor. Had I had the opportunity to meet him I don't necessarily think I would have wormed out of him the secret(s) to his successful run as an actor but I think I would have liked him because he wasn't full of himself and didn't seem to have much of an ego for someone who made it big after years of really working hard. Well written and exactly researched, I think this book manages to redefine Wayne for a new generation of fans and adds to his legend.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A GREAT BOOK!! By B Ardell Young This book has to be the definitive biography of John Wayne. All of Wayne's movies, marriages, affairs, friends, and enemies receive ample coverage. The author has done an exhaustive amount of interviews with family, friend, and foe, which leaves no part of Wayne's personal or professional life unturned. The book examines how Wayne's early life and the ten years spent making serial movie westerns for very little money shaped his character, work ethic, political beliefs, and his views on the movie industry. All of Wayne's films after Stagecoach are covered with the author providing the backstory about how the films were put together along with his relationships with directors, actors, and crews during filming. The in-depth stories about the financing of his films, the creation of his production company, Batjac, and how it survived the hard times especially the huge loss incurred making "The Alamo". An interesting part of the book was Wayne's predictions, in 1970, about the future of pay-TV and movie industry because he got the smallest details correct. His insight that foresaw HBO being the future of TV was remarkable since it was five years before HBO aired its first movie. If the reader is old enough to remember Wayne's death, Eyman plays on those feelings with the account of the suffering Wayne endured during the last month of his life. The chapter brought back the sadness of hearing about his death. There have been a number of biographies written about Wayne during the past fifteen years but this book is the best without a close runner-up. The other books suffer from authors with pre-formed attitudes, inadequate research, and attacking Wayne to increase book sales. In an odd sense, John Wayne has the same problem as Wyatt Earp in that both were so good and straight forth in their lives that many people feel the need to attack them.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Now Listen, and Listen Tight, Pilgrim! By Pvt. W. G. Kirby Customer This book is the finest bio of one of the most iconic actors in the existence of film. John Wayne has to many people, become a cliché: Western movie star, Action movie star, Conservative Republican spokesperson, American citizen. And much more. Too often Wayne has simply been tagged a dinosaur and untalented Hollywood product created by the press agents of the studios for which he worked. This book at last rips those undeserved labels from the man and goes on to reveal an intelligent and patriotic man who was a working actor who wanted to do his best in any role he into which he was cast. We also learn about the human side of the man, Marion Morrison, who became "The Duke" to all his friends. A family man who for forty years derided himself for destroying his first marriage through letting Hollywood overtake his self image, attitude, and sense of duty and obligation. Wayne's attempts to serve the nation in WWII are brought to light for the first time in terms we can understand. And the courage he had as he faced his own death is described with clarity and sensitivity. The book is excellent, and helps us understand how, even thirty five years after his death, Wayne movies can still draw old fans and win new ones! The author does an exceptional job in a well researched and presented text. He also points out the reason for the success of the actor: In a career of over forty years, Wayne excelled at playing

John Wayne, and convincing the fans he was the guy on the screen! He was much more than that, and more importantly (but little realized by many), he was also much less than that! Read this book if you have EVER enjoyed a John Wayne motion picture, but more so, if you have ever felt Wayne was a flat, cardboard, stereotype. This book deserves a wide audience. delivered my copy in the usual timely nature in excellent condition. And the author delivered the goods on Wayne!

The New York Times bestselling biography of John Wayne: authoritative and enormously engaging Eyman takes you through Wayne's life, his death, and his legend in a detailed, remarkably knowledgeable yet extremely readable way (Peter Bogdanovich, *The New York Times Book Review*). John Wayne died more than thirty years ago, but he remains one of today's five favorite movie stars. The celebrated Hollywood icon comes fully to life in this complex portrait by noted film historian and master biographer Scott Eyman. Exploring Wayne's early life with a difficult mother and a feckless father, Eyman gets at the details that the bean-counters and myth-spinners miss. Wayne's intimates have told things here that they've never told anyone else (*Los Angeles Times*). Eyman makes startling connections to Wayne's later days as an anti-Communist conservative, his stormy marriages to Latina women, and his notorious and surprisingly long-lived passionate affair with Marlene Dietrich. He also draws on the actor's own business records and, of course, his storied film career. We all think we know John Wayne, in part because he seemed to be playing himself in movie after movie. Yet as Eyman carefully lays out, John Wayne was an invention, a persona created layer by layer by an ambitious young actor (*The Washington Post*). This is the most nuanced and sympathetic portrait available of the man who became a symbol of his country at mid-century, a cultural icon and quintessential American male against whom other screen heroes are still compared.

From Booklist This is a fine biography of two men: Marion Duke Morrison, the jock who wound up working on a movie lot and eventually stepped hesitantly in front of the camera, and John Wayne, Morrison's alter ego, the movie star who bore only a passing resemblance to Morrison himself. A studio chief gave Morrison, then a young, mostly unknown actor, his new name, and over the next several decades, Morrison built a persona around it; but, as the author points out, he never legally changed his name, never really thought of himself as John Wayne. Eyman tracks Morrison's life and Wayne's career, showing how one impacted the other (Morrison became a better actor as he became comfortable with the Wayne mannerisms and performance style). The book nicely balances the personal and the professional and offers us an opportunity to get to know the man who stood, not in John Wayne's shadow (not that, by any means) but sort of beside him. A fine show-biz biography, delivering what fans want about the star's career but probing with uncommon depth into his personality. --David Pitt [An] authoritative and enormously engaging new biography. . . . [Eyman] takes you through Wayne's life, his death and his legend in a detailed, remarkably knowledgeable yet extremely readable way. (Peter Bogdanovich *The New York Times Book*) A spirited portrait of John Wayne and the Hollywood he worked in. . . . Traces his transition from the eager, boyish roles he played in early movies to confident leading man. (Michiko Kakutani *The New York Times*) No Wayne biography until now has ridden the defile between the reverential and the tendentious with quite the graceful equilibrium of this one. . . . Eyman gets at the details that the bean-counters and myth-spinners miss. . . . Wayne's intimates have told Eyman things here that they've never told anyone else. (David Kipen *The Los Angeles Times*) Deeply researched and totally absorbing. (Clive Sinclair *The Wall Street Journal*) We all think we know John Wayne, in part because he seemed to be playing himself in movie after movie. Yet as Eyman carefully lays out, John Wayne was an invention, a persona created layer by layer by an ambitious young actor. (Glenn Frankel *The Washington Post*) Scott Eyman has taken a legend and a statue and given us an odd, decent, muddled but deeply likeable man. That's what makes this book so readable and so touching. (David Thomson, author of *The New Biographical Dictionary of Film and Moments That Made the Movies*) [An] exemplary biography. . . . Eyman appears to have had broad access to Wayne's business and family life, and the result is a book with a compelling claim to being definitive. (Robert Horton *Film Comment*) In comprehensive detail, this new biography chronicles a great star at work. . . . Like a cinematographer, Mr. Eyman offers readers Wayne from many angles, in his own words and the words of those who worked with him. . . . An engrossing record of how the Duke stayed top dog for so long. (*The Economist*) One of the greatest movie star biographies ever written. (Allen Barra *Salon.com*) A comprehensive and compelling examination of The Duke. . . . Insightful, exhaustive and engrossing a definitive portrait of the man and the legend. (Kirkus's) Drawing deeply on interviews with family and friends, acclaimed biographer Eyman colorfully chronicles Wayne's life and work. . . . Compulsively readable. (*Publishers Weekly* (starred review)) Eyman's exhaustively informative biography is, in essence, a tribute. One ends it liking Duke a lot more. (John Sutherland *The Times (London)*) "Full of historical detail and fan facts, John Wayne tracks shy Marion Robert Morrison's path to the screen hero who got scant credit for his own craft in creating the John Wayne that rallied audiences." (David D'Arcy *The San Francisco Chronicle*) It would be hard to find a more complete picture of a public figure's life and legend than Eyman gives us of the Duke. (Larry Thornberry *The American Spectator*) About the Author Scott Eyman has written fifteen books, three of them *New York Times* bestsellers, including *John Wayne: The Life and Legend*. His most recent book is *Hank and Jim*. He has been awarded the

William K. Everson Award for Film History by the National Board of . He teaches film history at the University of Miami and lives in West Palm Beach with his wife, Lynn.