

# [***'Civil War' Map Shows Which States Secede in Alex Garland Movie***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BSM-5M31-JBR6-9004-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Highlight:** Which states have turned against the government in Alex Garland and A24's dystopian America?

**Body**

Alex Garland's dystopian action movie *Civil War* hits cinemas this Friday, and speculation is already rife about what has divided the nation—and which states are on either side of the rift.

In an alternative version of the present day, America is in the midst of a civil war, with the country seemingly split into four factions.

But which regions have turned their back on the government? Which states have joined together? And most importantly, what do they want?

**Which States Have Seceded in Alex Garland's *Civil War***

In *Civil War*, Kristen Dunst stars as Lee, a veteran photojournalist documenting the conflict. The film follows Lee as she makes her way from New York City to Washington D.C. as rebels attempt to take the U.S. capital.

*Civil War* never explicitly states why America is fighting against itself, although the tyrannical president, played by *Parks and Recreation* star Nick Offerman, is refusing to leave office—despite his second term being over.

One trailer hints at a surprising alliance between Texas and California, dubbed the "Western Forces."

In the clip [*re*](https://www.newsweek.com/civil-war-movie-trailer-predictive-programming-conspiracy-theory-alex-garland-1852435?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) [*leased by A24 in December*](https://www.newsweek.com/civil-war-movie-trailer-predictive-programming-conspiracy-theory-alex-garland-1852435?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), the president addresses the nation, telling Americans: "The so-called Western forces of Texas and California have suffered a very grave defeat at the hands of the United States military."

Why the two states would join forces [*has bee*](https://www.theatlantic.com/culture/archive/2024/04/civil-war-alex-garland-interview/677984/) [*n a hot topic*](https://www.theatlantic.com/culture/archive/2024/04/civil-war-alex-garland-interview/677984/) on social media, with their real-life counterparts leaning towards opposite sides of the political spectrum. Texas has been a red state since 1980, while California has been staunchly Democratic since the 1990s.

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However, California and Texas aren't the only states to join together in *Civil War.* Most of the South-Eastern states have formed the "Florida Alliance," including Tennessee, Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi, Louisiana, Alabama and Oklahoma.

Many of the North-Western states have united to form the "New People's Army," including Washington, Oregon, Montana, North and South Dakota, Minnesota, Idaho, Wyoming and Idaho.

Middle America is mostly "loyalist states," areas still faithful to the U.S. government. Although it's currently unknown what the four alliances represent. California and Texas are the only alliance to be separated by other factions, sitting roughly 1,350 miles apart.

**Who Stars in Alex Garland's Civil War?**

Joining Dunst/Lee for the journey is fellow war photographer Joel, played by Wagner Moura, while *Priscilla* star Cailee Spaney portrays trainee photojournalist Jessie.

Theater legend Stephen McKinley Henderson plays Sammy, a *New York Times* field reporter edging closer to retirement, while Dunst's husband and frequent collaborator Jessie Plemmons also makes an appearance in *Civil War* as a militant threatening Lee and her team.

**Did Donald Trump Inspire Alex Garland's *Civil War***

Although some people online have compared *Civil War's* storyline to [*Donald Trump*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/donald-trump?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)'s alleged attempts to [*overturn the 2020 general election*](https://www.newsweek.com/new-transcript-secret-service-agent-shed-light-donald-trumps-actions-1878147?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), Garland [*said a "huge rise in populism and polarisation*](https://www.anothermag.com/design-living/15560/alex-garland-civil-war-interview-review#:~:text=Was%20there%20a%20specific%20trigger,from%20that%2C%20which%20is%20extremism.)" inspired *Civil War.*

The director—whose credits include the critically acclaimed sci-fi thrillers[*Ex-Machina*](https://www.newsweek.com/real-world-tech-anxieties-behind-ex-machina-327755?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) (2014) and[*Annihilation*](https://www.newsweek.com/annihilation-book-vs-movie-southern-reach-novels-816932?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) (2018)—began writing the film in 2020, following the outbreak of COVID-19.

"It was just this huge ambient situation [across the world] where journalists were being disempowered as the enemy," [*he recently told*](https://www.anothermag.com/design-living/15560/alex-garland-civil-war-interview-review#:~:text=Was%20there%20a%20specific%20trigger,from%20that%2C%20which%20is%20extremism.)*Another*[*magazine*](https://www.anothermag.com/design-living/15560/alex-garland-civil-war-interview-review#:~:text=Was%20there%20a%20specific%20trigger,from%20that%2C%20which%20is%20extremism.). "The huge rise in populism and polarisation and the thing that flows from that, which is extremism."

Garland also said his intention isn't the polarize viewers, hoping to "create a compelling, engaging narrative that has a conversation rather than a lecture."

"Because conversation is the thing that is really struggling to exist in public discourse," he told *Yahoo*.

**What Do the Reviews Say About Alex Garland's *Civil War***

The reviews have been overwhelmingly positive so far. *Civil War* holds an 87 percent critics score on review aggregator *Rotten Tomatoes,* giving the film a "fresh" rating.

*The New York Times* described the drama as "mesmerizingly, horribly gripping," while the *New Statesman* said *Civil War* is Garland's "sharpest, most visionary rendering yet of the world gone wrong."

However, *Variety's* reviewer Richard Lawson was less enthused, calling Civil War's vague ***politics*** "frustrating" and "skittish." *Deadline'*s Valerie Complex agreed, lamenting the film's "thin characterization" and "overreliance on spectacle over substance."

*Civil War comes to theaters on Friday, April 12, 2024.*

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2376878/kirsten-dunst-lee-civil-war.jpg)

**Graphic**

Kirsten Dunst as Lee in Civil War

Murray Close/MoviePix

Kirsten Dunst stars as photojournalist "Lee" in the film "Civil War," directed by Alex Garland and produced by A24. May 13, 2022. The dystopian war drama is set in an alternative version of the present, where America is being ravaged by a civil war.

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