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*Band of Brothers* Film Review

*Band of Brothers* is an HBO special single-season production based on Steven A. Ambrose’s novel of the same name. It follows the story of the 101st Airborne, 506th Parachute Infantry Division’s Easy Company, one of the most famous and effective units deployed in the European Theater of Operations during World War 2. The main character, Maj. Dick Winters, is played by Damian Lewis. Using first-person cinematography techniques, the show portrays the actions and thoughts of the men who fought in Easy Company.

The film follows the operations of the Easy Company from their days in Camp Toccoa, Georgia under Cpt. Herbert Sobel to their eventual capture of Berchtesgaden in Germany. They begin their combat career by dropping into Normandy early morning on D-Day, fighting their way through stiff German resistance and eventually clearing the path for the landing forces to make their way inland. They move through France (including the strategic capture of Brecourt Manor), Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg all the way to Germany and Austria.

One of the most striking visual techniques used throughout the film is switching between first-person handheld cameras (to give a shaky, personal impression) and sweeping shots to provide an overall view of the action. It makes the viewer feel as if they were really there with Easy Company in the heat of battle. The musical score consists of primarily suspenseful orchestral music and lots of 1940’s swing music, properly representing the musical tastes of the era. During most of the battle scenes, however, there is very little music, if any; the orchestral pieces are only played during otherwise silent scenes to avoid breaking immersion in the film.

The film overall represents the base novel well, with some minor exceptions. The novel uses a lot of content from PFC Daniel Webster, who after the war went on to become a writer. However, he did not necessarily represent Easy Company as a whole, so the film takes a rather large departure from the majority of that content and only following most of the battle scenes described by officers or frontline infantrymen. There are also a few transpositions of characters (some characters were put in situations that they otherwise were not) and some rumors that may or may not have happened portrayed as truth.

If you’re only reading this to know if you should watch the film or not, the answer is yes. The film is an excellent portrayal of both the *Band of Brothers* novel and the life of a paratrooper during WW2 as a whole. There are a few departures from reality, however, so it is advised to not take everything as absolute fact (or to use it as a research source, for that matter). However, it shows a sense of respect to both sides of the war and is absolutely something that everyone interested in the time period should watch.