

John Wayne: America's Icon, Hero, and Myth

John Wayne was more than just an actor; he was an American icon, a hero, and a myth. In his acclaimed biography, *John Wayne: America*, Garry Wills explores the complex personality, career, and enduring legacy of one of the most beloved figures in American history.



John Wayne's America by Garry Wills

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 13172 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 384 pages

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The Man Behind the Icon

Born Marion Robert Morrison in 1907, John Wayne grew up in a small town in Iowa. From an early age, he developed a love for horses and the outdoors, which would later shape his iconic screen persona. After attending the University of Southern California, Wayne began his acting career in the 1930s, playing small roles in low-budget Westerns.

Wayne's breakthrough came in 1939 with the release of John Ford's *Stagecoach*. In this classic Western, Wayne played Ringo Kid, a fugitive outlaw who joins a group of travelers on a dangerous journey through the

Arizona desert. Wayne's performance was both charismatic and vulnerable, and it established him as a star.

The American Hero

During World War II, Wayne served in the U.S. Navy, where he earned a Bronze Star for his bravery. After the war, he returned to Hollywood and resumed his acting career. In the 1950s and 1960s, Wayne starred in a series of popular Westerns, including *Rio Bravo*, *The Searchers*, and *True Grit*. These films cemented his image as the quintessential American hero: strong, courageous, and always fighting for what's right.

Wayne's patriotism extended beyond his screen persona. He was a vocal supporter of the Vietnam War and the conservative political movement. His outspoken views often sparked controversy, but they also endeared him to many Americans who shared his beliefs.

The Enduring Myth

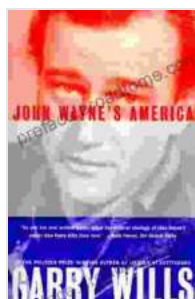
John Wayne died of cancer in 1979, but his legacy continues to live on. He remains one of the most popular and recognizable actors in American history, and his films continue to be enjoyed by audiences around the world. Wayne's image and persona have become synonymous with American values such as courage, independence, and self-reliance.

Garry Wills' biography, *John Wayne: America*, is a fascinating and insightful look at the life and career of this iconic figure. Wills explores the many facets of Wayne's personality, from his humble beginnings to his rise to stardom. He also examines the complex relationship between Wayne's public and private lives, and the ways in which his films reflected the changing values of American society.

John Wayne was more than just an actor; he was a cultural phenomenon. He represented the ideals of American masculinity, patriotism, and individualism. His films continue to inspire and entertain audiences around the world, and his legacy will endure for generations to come.

Garry Wills' *John Wayne: America* is the definitive biography of one of the most important figures in American history. It is a must-read for anyone who wants to understand the man behind the myth.

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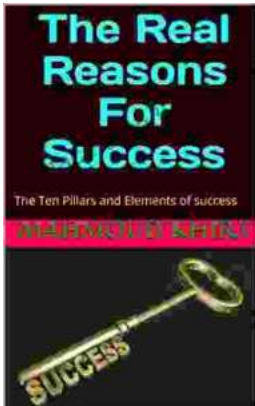
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