



## Oliver Stone's USA: Film, History, and Controversy

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Challenging audiences and leaving critics in disarray, the films of Oliver Stone have compelled viewers to reexamine many of their most revered beliefs about America's past. Like no other filmmaker, Stone has left an indelible mark on public opinion and political life, even as he has generated enormous controversy and debate among those who take issue with his dramatic use of history.

This book brings Stone face-to-face with some of his most thoughtful critics and supporters and allows Stone himself ample room to respond to their views. Featuring such luminaries as David Halberstam, Stephen Ambrose, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Walter Lafeber, and Robert Rosenstone, these writers critique Stone's most contested films to show how they may distort, amplify, or transcend the historical realities they appear to depict.

These essays—on *Salvador*, *Platoon*, *Wall Street*, *Born on the Fourth of July*, *The Doors*, *JFK*, *Heaven and Earth*, *Natural Born Killers*, and *Nixon*—enlarge our understanding of Stone's films, while also giving us a fuller appreciation of the filmmaker as artist and intellectual. They reveal how Stone's experience in Vietnam colors his views of American government and corporate culture and suggest new ways of looking at the complex tensions between art and history that shape Stone's films.

In response, Stone offers an articulate and passionate defense of his artistic vision. Disavowing once and for all the mantle of "cinematic historian," Stone declares himself first and foremost a storyteller, a dramatist and mythmaker who deliberately refashions historical facts in pursuit of higher truths. The undeniable centerpiece of this artistic manifesto is Stone's fascinating commentary on the making and meanings of *JFK*, the film that reopened a case that many thought finally closed.

A provocative and timely reexamination of a great American artist, *Oliver Stone's USA* will also reignite public debate over the relationship between history and art as well as the artist's responsibility to his audience.

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