

The Film Behind the Fight

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EARLY 1940 found the United States engaging in a global war and faced with the momentous task of mobilizing and training 10,000,000 peace-loving citizens to fight with the highest degree of military skill and to use the technical weapons of destruction.

It ordinarily takes from two to four years to train a soldier, but since a war had suddenly been thrust upon us, large armies had to be turned out in much less time.

The military leadership responsible for training the rapidly mobilizing armed forces felt that in this great school where there could be no failures teaching tools were necessary to carrying on instruction. The Army, Navy, and Marine Corps immediately called to duty all available personnel familiar with the production, distribution, and utilization of visual training materials.

Getting Facts onto Celluloid

The Army Pictorial Service, Signal Corps, is the agency which is designated by the War Department to produce, procure, and distribute all films and film strips to

Army Ground Forces and Army Service Forces personnel. The first major objective set up by those responsible for training was the production of films dealing with approved War Department doctrine, covering specific topics, and intended for use at a definite time and place in the training program. Up to August, 1944, more than eight hundred Army Service Forces and Army Ground Forces training film subjects had been produced or procured covering almost every phase of the Army training program. Since fighting a modern war entails technical training in almost every area of learning, many of the technical films developed and used by the military may be of great value to peacetime educational agencies when the plans for re-conversion are complete.

In addition to the above training films, approximately one thousand 35mm film strips have been developed for use in conjunction with lectures, demonstrations, or other training procedures requiring the use of projected still pictures.

Other film material developed to meet morale, orientation, and general training needs of military and civilian personnel includes:

1. One hundred and thirty film bulletins, which are sound motion picture subjects dealing with new and ever-changing military developments based on actual combat conditions, have been produced and distributed for the information and continuous training of enlisted men and officers.

2. Orientation films, the "Why We Fight" series, were produced by Colonel

Major Dennis R. Williams knows the story of training film in the U. S. Army from experience both in this country and overseas. He is equally well acquainted with the role of visual aids in our schools, having served before the war as field representative for a nationally known producer of educational films. His descriptions of Army techniques, including the kinds of learning materials used, the mechanics of setting up a film library, and rules for presenting films effectively, contain many tips worthy of adoption by educators.

Frank Capra of the Army Pictorial Service at the request of Morale Services Division, Army Service Forces. These films have been shown to all troops in order to give them an understanding of the background and causes of the war.

3. Forty industrial incentive film subjects have been produced and used for showing civilian war-workers the relationship of the war-worker to the fighting men throughout the world.

4. Miscellaneous films, combat bulletins, Army-Navy *Screen Magazine*, special productions, and historical record films are also produced and distributed to the armed forces and civilian agencies for information and training purposes or stored as part of the war records for reference purposes.

What You Want—When You Want It

Early in the training program, those responsible for the training and production program realized that efficient distribution and maintenance of visual aids materials and projection equipment was necessary for the program to succeed. In order for any visual aid to be effective, the film or other aid must be available for the instructor at the right time and at the right place in the training cycle. To accomplish the proper distribution, film

libraries have been established in all of the Service Commands and in overseas theaters of operations.

Every Service Command or overseas theater has one central film library established at its headquarters. The central film library acts as an area supply source for all the sub-libraries which are established

at large posts, camps, or stations in the Command in order that instructors may have available all films frequently used in the individual training programs. Films of a general nature and not requiring frequent use are only deposited in the central libraries and

obtained on a loan basis by sub-libraries and units. Small Army units, using training films infrequently, do not have a sub-library available but may obtain any War Department film on a loan basis from the central film library.

All films, other visual aids, and projection equipment are centralized in the film library building at all posts having library facilities. Each library has a uniform system of film cataloging, booking, issuing, and maintenance for films and projection equipment. The library has a small preview room where instructors may come to preview films and make plans for their use in subsequent training periods. Many directors of training insist that no instructor use a film without a preview and that



(U. S. Army Signal Corps Photo)

Training films bring reality to the classroom.

definite preliminary and follow-up plans be made in advance. The average post film library has a visual aids officer or civilian as its director. The director is assisted by four or five enlisted technicians or civilians who carry on the library activities.

Planned Use for Greater Learning

To insure maximum benefits from the use of training films, film bulletins, and film strips, the directors of training for Army Ground Forces and Army Service Forces, assisted by the Office of the Chief Signal Officer, have used the following procedures and devices:

1. Digests have been prepared and distributed on all films giving a summary of film content, together with suggested preliminary and follow-up activities.

2. Definite instructions on the techniques of film use have been issued in applicable instructor's manuals and constantly repeated in general and local training publications.

3. Training conferences have been held at local posts, camps, and stations, and at headquarters of all Service Commands in order to keep instructors informed of materials available and to demonstrate to incoming instructors procedures for obtaining and properly using visual aid materials.

4. All new films now produced have instructor's references and teaching guides printed and distributed for the use of training personnel.

5. An accurate system of monthly reports has been maintained by all foreign and domestic libraries. Information on use of each print, number of showings, number of uses made of each projector, and projectors being repaired is sent to the Army Pictorial Service, Office of the Chief Signal Officer, for compilation and

forwarding to staff agencies and all units concerned. Through this very accurate system of reporting, a constant program of evaluation and utilization improvement has been carried on. As a result of this program the monthly showings increased between June 1943 and June 1944 from 125,000 to 225,000, while the number of prints required decreased from 110,000 to 98,000.

What We Have Learned

As a result of the very extensive program of production, distribution, and utilization of visual aid materials carried on by the Army during a three-year period, the following observations should be of interest to all concerned with education and training:

1. The effectiveness of the Army training program is reflected by the successes of our troops on the battlefields of the world. Films, film strips, opaque projectors, graphic aids, and other visual aids were used in every phase of the Army

What GI Joe Is Seeing

DURING THE MONTH of June 1944, attendance figures of a few of the most widely used films from the Army film library facilities in the continental United States alone were as follows:

TITLES	ATTENDANCE
<i>The Battle of China</i>	593,332
<i>Baptism of Fire</i>	204,164
<i>The Negro Soldier</i>	349,524
<i>First Aid for Battle Injuries</i> ..	453,606
<i>Military Courtesy</i>	275,378
<i>Map Reading</i>	353,708
<i>Camouflage-Individual Concealment</i>	244,432
<i>Sucker Bait</i>	289,552



Model planes are effective aids in teaching Cadets about allied and enemy aircraft.

(Official Photo U. S. Air Forces)

training program and have proven to be necessary tools for the instructor.

2. Training films produced for use at a definite time and place must be immediately available in order to be of maximum value, but general information films may be obtained from regional loan libraries.

3. General information films used in orientation and in the development of attitudes have proven to be valuable in the training program.

4. Excellent visual aids officers and civilian visual aids coordinators have been successfully trained by an intensive three-week course, when those selected have had a thorough background in general education and training procedures.

5. In the production, selection, and utilization of all visual aids materials, the technical agencies employed must be under the guidance and direction of those responsible for training doctrine and procedures.

6. Due to the intensive use given projection equipment and because of the use planned for this equipment during the period of demobilization and in postwar Army training, it seems that no sizable quantity of this equipment now employed will be available for disposal to civilian educational activities when the war ends.

The above summary covers only a brief review of the films and film strips program in the Army Ground Forces and Army Service Forces. The Army Air Forces, Navy, and Marine Corps have similar programs and have reported the same effective results.

When victory is won as a result of the courage, training, and effort on the part of our soldiers and civilians, it is believed these same tools for instruction can be employed to banish from the world hate, disease, poverty, ignorance, and other lurking and dangerous ghost-like dragons that continue to threaten the peace we are now purchasing at such a dear price.

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