

LEADING TO WAR

SEE WHERE THE TRUTH LIES

a film and website that chronicle the path to war in Iraq

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FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions:

- [What is LEADING TO WAR?](#)
- [Where can I see LEADING TO WAR?](#)
- [Why did you make this film?](#)
- [Haven't we seen all this footage before?](#)
- [Why is all the footage of Bush administration officials? Why didn't you interview others?](#)
- [Why is the footage presented chronologically?](#)
- [Do you have the rights to use the news footage in the film?](#)
- [Could you have used this footage under 'Fair Use'?](#)
- [Who are the filmmakers?](#)
- [Why did you make this website? Why is it so extensive?](#)

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• **What is LEADING TO WAR?**

LEADING TO WAR is an independently produced film that chronicles the Bush administration making the case to the American public for war with Iraq.

• **Where can I see LEADING TO WAR?**

You can [watch LEADING TO WAR for free](#) on this website, via streaming or download, or you can [purchase a DVD](#) of the film. The film is subtitled in 19 languages in order to reach a wide audience.

We are also planning to show the film through as many other outlets as possible. If you would like to present this film at any venue, or have other ideas for showing the film, please [contact us](#).

• **Why did you make this film?**

We thought that this film could be unique and powerful, and we felt an obligation to make it.

Historically, we thought that a chronicle of how a government leads its people to war, step by step, could be useful to inform the public and to help prevent future unnecessary wars.

We thought back to the Vietnam war. Many people know the general events that led to the gradual involvement of the U.S. in that war, *but what exactly did the government say to the public?* We may recall some clips of President Lyndon Johnson, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, and General William Westmoreland speaking to the public – but the picture is incomplete and fragmented.

The Iraq War is a critical event in U.S. history that will be studied for years to come. We wanted to show the actual news clips of the Bush administration as it led the U.S. public to support a war against a country that had not attacked the United States and presented no credible threat to the United States.

We hope this film and website will contribute to more public awareness and understanding about how the Iraq War happened.

• **Haven't we seen all this footage before?**

Probably not. Some of this footage is well-known – such as Powell's infamous presentation to the UN, or Bush's "axis of evil" State of the Union address – but few viewers have seen all of the footage presented in the film.

The hope is that by presenting all of this footage in one place, chronologically, distilled down to 72 minutes – and with the benefit of hindsight and history – one can more clearly see the overall picture of how Bush officials crafted their arguments and how they developed and marketed their case for war over a 14 month

period.

● **Why is all the footage of Bush administration officials? Why didn't you interview others?**

Early on, we explored creative ideas for commenting on the footage, including text on screen, voice-over, and footage of others besides Bush administration officials. We considered including interviews with former government officials who have now spoken out against the war or about the Bush administration's conduct, as well as outside experts, political scientists, linguists, etc.

But we felt that ground had been covered in other films. We did think a chronology of what the administration actually said would be a valuable historical document. We realized that there would be power in letting the material speak for itself, allowing the viewer to have a direct experience of the Bush officials' statements.

The explanations and analyses would be saved for the website.

● **Why is the footage presented chronologically?**

When experimenting with the clips out of chronological order, there were advantages in terms of thematic links, but we felt that something was lost. Only by staying with the chronology could one clearly see how the administration's rhetoric shifted and adjusted over time – how its marketing campaign for war was so skillfully structured.

● **Do you have the rights to use the news footage in the film?**

Yes. All of the footage in the film has been licensed from a variety of archive news sources (who also provided us with videotapes of the material for editing), such as CNN, AP, BBC, ABC, NBC, etc.

● **Could you have used this footage under 'Fair Use'?**

We believe so. After reviewing an early cut of LEADING TO WAR with our copyright attorney, we concluded that we could use the news footage without permission from the networks, under section 107 of the U.S. Copyright Act, which permits 'fair use' of copyrighted materials. We learned that fair use is determined on a case-by-case basis, weighing a number of factors. LEADING TO WAR met many of the requirements we reviewed relating to fair use, including:

- 1) The film uses short clips extracted from longer material
- 2) The clips are news footage, as opposed to highly creative copyrighted works
- 3) The clips portray government figures in their official roles
- 4) The film is a documentary with an educational purpose
- 5) The film comments on the material it has incorporated, both explicitly (in the epilogue and prologue of the film) and by the very nature of the compilation it presents

After careful deliberation, we licensed the footage directly from the news networks, at considerable cost, rather than use the material under fair use doctrine, for two reasons. First, we wanted the highest-quality master tapes, which we could only obtain from the news sources themselves (via signed licenses). Second, and more important, we thought that locating this footage from other sources (schools, media organizations, libraries, etc.) might take an inordinate amount of time – and some of the footage that we wanted to use in the film might be impossible to find.

● **Who are the filmmakers?**

Read more about the filmmakers [here](#).

● **Why did you make this website? Why is it so extensive?**

The website grew organically out of our editing process and rough cut screenings of the film.

One viewer of an early rough cut, while appreciative of the film, said afterwards during an in-depth conversation, "Maybe this film means more to you than it does to me?" After reflecting on this comment, we realized that it was only through repeated viewings of the footage – along with editing room discussions – that allowed for a deeper understanding of the Bush administration's rhetoric and tactics. This led to the creation of the analytical sections of this website, in order to complement the viewer's experience of the film.

Another early viewer, while watching the Bush administration put forth its case for war, thought the film presented a solid case in favor of war. Then, reading the epilogue, which points out the many Bush pre-war claims that were not true, he said, "Oh my God, if this is true, these people should be impeached... this is terrible." After a moment's reflection, he added, "But how can I trust you? If you're claiming they're dishonest, how do I know you're not being dishonest?" His comment led us to decide to fully document, with citations, the refutations of the false [pre-war claims of the Bush administration](#).

With these two comments as catalysts, and with the continual discovery of more strategies and techniques used by the Bush administration, this website evolved as a companion piece to the film, working in concert to explore how the Bush government led the United States to war.

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How did the U.S. government lead its people to war?

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